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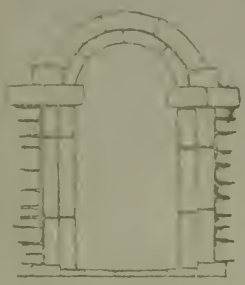

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NORMAN

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TRANSITIONAL NORMAN
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EARLY ENGLISH

EARLY ENGLISH
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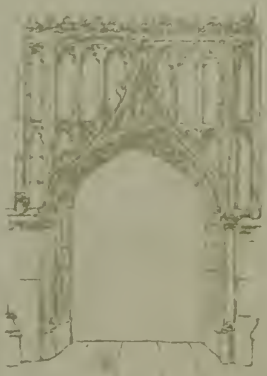

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WELLS CATHEDRAL FROM THE WEST.

From the picture by G. F. Robson, engraved by J. Redaway.

CATHEDRALS, ABBEYS
& FAMOUS CHURCHES
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WELLS GLASTONBURY & CLEEVE

BY

EDWARD FOORD

AUTHOR OF "THE LAST AGE OF ROMAN BRITAIN"
"THE BYZANTINE EMPIRE," ETC.

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EDITOR'S PREFACE

THE series of volumes devoted to cathedrals, abbeys and famous churches to which this belongs has been produced on a plan which is somewhat novel. The writers have been encouraged to emphasise as far as possible the personal aspect of the buildings described, in order that those who visit them with the books as their guides may understand the human element behind the great architectural achievements. Not only has space been given to builders and benefactors, but biographical references are made to those who are buried within the churches. In this way the human equation is sufficiently prominent for those who are not well acquainted with architectural matters to become interested in the structures, quite apart from whether the style is appealing to their several tastes or whether they had previously felt any curiosity as to how or when changes took place in the vast buildings which resulted from their aims.

Architectural description has been restricted to salient features, and where details are discussed it is because of their special interest. Mouldings and ornament generally are not described in detail, and ordinary features such as piscinæ, aumbries, stoups and so on, which tend to make a book a mere inventory of

church furniture, are as a rule ignored unless they are of particular interest.

It has been my object to illustrate the books without relying on any of the familiar series of professional photographs which, as a rule, give the least attractive aspects of the cathedrals, missing the effects of strong shadow and picturesque lighting, and the particularly pleasing glimpses obtained from aisles and the less-hackneyed view-points. I therefore visited the buildings described in this volume in September last, and with camera and sketch-book obtained the materials for the illustrations.

GORDON HOME.

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By Gordon Home

WELLS, GLASTONBURY AND CLEEVE

CHAPTER I

WELLS CATHEDRAL—PRELIMINARY AND HISTORICAL

Foundation of the Diocese—History—Bishops—Story of the Building

Tradition assigns the foundation of the Church of St. Andrew by the springs of Wells to Ine, the Lawgiver of the West Saxons. There is no direct evidence in favour of the theory, but it is not an unreasonable one, though the story that he established a bishopric there is almost certainly to be rejected. At the same time there may be a substratum of truth in it; the British bishop Daniel may be a quite authentic personage, and the dedication to St. Andrew looks as if it may be older than the times of Ine. Perhaps the English king, when he conquered Somerset, took over also its bishop, and obtained his assistance in effecting a new ecclesiastical organisation. Ine unquestionably left his mark upon Somerset, and the building or rebuilding at Wells of a church by him is quite a probable action.

But there is absolutely no reason to believe that any bishop took his seat in the little village around the springs and ponds until 910. The documentary evidence of the existence of a church with a staff of priests or canons is a charter of the obscure West Saxon king Kynewulf, dated 766, and it is by no means certain that this charter is genuine. But since it makes no pretensions to claim Wells as a bishopric, there is something to be said in its favour.

Another reason in support of the theory that a church of some pretensions existed here at an early date is furnished by the certain fact that about 910 King Edward the Elder, when carrying forward the political and ecclesiastical re-organisation of his father Alfred, chose Wells as the seat of the new bishopric of Somerset. It seems sensible to suppose that he had some such reason for fixing the headquarters of the new see at Wells, instead of the important Taunton or the historic Bath, for the purely politico-racial causes which impelled the earlier English kings to establish their spiritual advisers in country villages were certainly not operative in the xth century. So, on the whole, it seems fair to believe that, when Edward the Elder appointed Aethelhelm to be bishop of the *Sumorsaetas*, the consecration took place in a small Romanesque church, such as that of St. Laurence at Bradford-on-Avon, which may later have been enlarged, perhaps rebuilt, for episcopal purposes.

Bishop Aethelhelm ruled at Wells for five years until 914–15, when he became Archbishop of Canter-

bury. Of his obscure successors during the subsequent century little is known, until there is reached the name of Aethelstan or Lyfing, who ultimately became Archbishop of Canterbury, succeeding in 1013 the martyr St. Aelfeah, murdered by the Danes. There s reason to think that the affairs of the see were in no flourishing condition; the Church of England had lost much of its ancient virility; and in the XIth century, with the exception of a few fine figures, such as St. Wulfstan of Worcester, it produced no one of merit. Cnut gave Bishop Duduc (1033–60) the estates of Congresbury and Banwell, which the bishop bequeathed to his cathedral, but hereupon Harold Godwinson, afterward King of England and already regent, stepped in and appropriated them.

So when, in 1060, Gisa of Lotharingia, a learned foreign clerk, was appointed bishop by Edward the Confessor, he found all things wrong. The church was small; its revenues were scanty; there were only four or five clerks attached to it: they had no common lodging, and were so poverty-stricken as to be forced to beg their bread. All of which is, of course, entirely conformable with the primitive precept and practice of the Christian faith, but extremely distasteful to a priest with a high opinion of himself and his dignity.

In any case Gisa was an active organiser and devoted to the material interests of his see, whatever may have been his merits as a Christian. He worried Edward the Confessor, Queen Eadgyth, Harold II., and William the Conqueror steadily and perseveringly, and obtained from all of them gifts of money and land

which enabled him to endow his bishopric with a revenue sufficient to maintain it. He established his canons in a semi-monastic building with a common dormitory, refectory and cloister, and brought them under regular rule—probably a very necessary if unpopular step, for English canons in that age had a somewhat dubious reputation. The "rule" of the assembly was that of the Frankish saint Chrodegang.

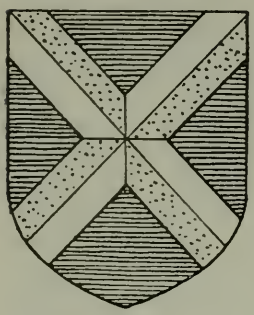
Gisa died in 1088, and with his rigorous, if unpopular, rule the Bishopric of Wells came for a time to an end. Jean de Villula of Tours, his successor, obtained from Rufus a grant of the Abbey Church of Bath, and from Pope Urban II. a bull authorising the transference of the episcopal seat thither. Gisa's buildings were demolished, for no very comprehensible reasons, and the ten canons were turned out to lodge as they could with a salary of three pounds per annum. Jean de Villula established himself at Bath, appointing his brother Hildebert as provost or steward of Wells. The canons, however, would not forego their rights, and never ceased to insist upon the permanence of the cathedral rank of their church. The dispute continued all through the reigns of Jean de Villula and his successor Godfrey (1123–35). It was not until the accession of Robert of Lewes (1136–66) that the quarrel was at last composed by him with much tact and wisdom, and that the great days of Wells began. He organised and endowed a body of twenty-three canons and a dean for Wells, and also provided the cathedral with a revenue sufficient for its maintenance. He took the title of Bishop of Bath and Wells,

thus giving the famous Romano-British city the priority, as was fitting, but arranged that the bishop should have his throne at both places and be elected by both chapters in conjunction. Concurrently with these labours Bishop Robert set himself to build a cathedral on a worthy scale at Wells.

In 1148 the work had made such progress that he was able solemnly to consecrate the church. He was supported at the ceremony by Jocelin, Bishop of Salisbury, Simon of Worcester, and Robert of Hereford. The fact that so much progress was made in twelve years suggests that the anarchy of Stephen's reign was not so frightful and widespread as is sometimes supposed. Bishop Robert lived for eighteen years after the consecration of his new cathedral, and saw the beginning of better times for England. He assisted at the coronation of Henry II., and also, eight years later, at a ceremony which was to have fatal and far-reaching consequences—the consecration of Thomas à Becket as Archbishop of Canterbury. One result was that owing to the quarrel between the king and Becket the Diocese of Bath and Wells was left without a head for eight years after the death of Robert I.; not until 1174 was the embittered monarch at last persuaded to permit the election of Reginald de Bohun, son of Jocelin, Bishop of Sarum, as Bishop of Bath and Wells.

Reginald de Bohun, who presided over the diocese until 1191, was the second great figure in the history of the cathedral. In whatever state it had beer left by his predecessor, Reginald was evidently unsatisfied

with it, for he began the work of rebuilding it on its present lines. He was a man of the type of William de Warelwast of Exeter rather than that of Anselm or St. Hugh of Lincoln, an active official rather than an ecclesiastic, but he was certainly a good friend of Wells, and evidently designed to make it the richest see in England by incorporating in it the Abbey of Glastonbury. This design he initiated by making the abbot a member of the chapter, and by erecting the liberty of the monastery into an archdeaconry. His activities, which were many and various, passed by Wells for the most part, but his building enthusiasm has left its traces there to this day. About 1175 he held a chapter, in which a large yearly grant of money was arranged for the purpose of restoring the cathedral. Another charter, recording a private gift, speaks of "the admirable structure of the rising church," showing that steady progress was being made. Reginald Fitz-Jocelin de Bohun must be accounted the founder of Wells Cathedral as it now stands. In 1191 he was elected as archbishop by the monks of Canterbury, and hurried down to Wells to secure the election to the bishopric of his cousin Savaric. On his way back he fell ill and died at Dogmersfield in Hampshire.



Arms of the See of Bath and Wells

Bishop Savaric was a man of the same general type as Reginald, and much more hot-tempered and in-

clined to violence. He was the grandson of Savaric Fitz-Chana, Lord of Midhurst, and by marriage was connected with the Hohenstaufen emperors of the West, as well as with the de Bohuns. His election was a manifest "job," partly political, partly due to his high connections. Savaric did not even receive priestly orders until just before his consecration at Rome in 1192. The monks of Bath supported him, but the canons of Wells at first declined to accept the election until the justiciar, Hubert of Rouen, ignored them and confirmed it. Savaric was a curious character, proud, ambitious, and high-handed, not to say cruel when his interests were threatened, yet apparently impulsively kind and even generous. His whole aim seems to have been the aggrandisement of his see by the merging into it of Glastonbury: in the furtherance of such schemes he was naturally stoutly supported by his canons. A man without monastic ties—like William de Warelwast—he preferred to strengthen the secular chapter of Wells. He pursued his designs steadily and unscrupulously: when in Germany, negotiating for the release of Richard I., he induced the Emperor Henry VI. to put pressure upon his captive to agree to the amalgamation of Glastonbury with Bath and Wells. He also used his influence in the same discreditable fashion to get himself elected Archbishop of Canterbury.

Savaric was too greedy, and over-reached himself. Once free, Richard revoked the letter which he had written in support of Savaric's candidature, and quietly, if not always very steadily, encouraged the

monks of Glastonbury to hold out against the bishop, though in 1195 the latter obtained a bull from Celestine III. declaring the union of Bath and Glastonbury, and elevating the church of the abbey to the rank of a cathedral. That did not console the monks of Glastonbury, and they held out more or less successfully until 1199, when Savaric bought King John's assent to his taking possession, rode off with a troop of horsemen to the abbey, and seized it by force, mprisoning the monks and even flogging some of the most obstinate of them. The abbot, William Pyke, who had been elected contrary to Savaric's wishes, was expelled, and when he died at Rome, protesting against his dismissal, the Glastonbury monks declared that the bishop had poisoned him.

Pope Innocent III., thus appealed to by both sides, gave an award which speaks well for his sense of justice and real desire to keep peace if possible. Glastonbury was confirmed to Savaric, but he was sternly forbidden to resort to violence, and ordered to make restitution to those whom he had injured. This he did, and seems to have set himself to remove the bad impression which he had made by conferring benefits upon the abbey. To Wells he was, as far as in him lay, a staunch friend and benefactor. In fact, Savaric was an active and turbulent feudal lord, not by any means of the worst type—but a somewhat peculiar servant of Mother Church.

Savaric was not perhaps altogether unmindful of the church of his faithful canons at Wells, but assuredly his wandering and turbulent life afforded small

opportunity for building activity, and the edifice did not probably receive much attention: nor did matters improve during the first ten years of his successor. This neglect was in no sense due to that successor, for Jocelin de Welles, the brother of Hugh, Bishop of Lincoln, was probably the greatest of the building bishops. Elected in 1205 as Bishop of Bath and Glastonbury, Jocelin was forced to leave England in 1208 from fear of King John, and remained in exile until 1213. When, however, the civil war broke out in 1216 he adhered to the side of the king, and supported Cardinal Gualo when he crowned the boy Henry III. on October 28th. He took an active part in the settlement of the country on the conclusion of the war, and in 1218 ended the strife with Glastonbury. The bishop surrendered his claims upon the abbey in exchange for certain manors: and the bishopric henceforth was known by its now permanent title of "Bath and Wells."

To the end of his life Bishop Jocelin took a leading share in public affairs: he seems to have enjoyed a great reputation for integrity and impartiality, for he is frequently found acting as a judge in disputes between ecclesiastics and ecclesiastical bodies. But his principal renown must rest upon his completion of the cathedral at Wells. Some of the credit is due to his brother Hugh of Lincoln, who subscribed money lavishly, and also aided Jocelin to establish the hospital of St. John. But the work as a whole was conceived and executed by Jocelin. The nave was completed in loyal conformity with the style of the earlier portion

built by Reginald; and the great West Front, with its marvellous wealth of statuary, designed and erected.

It seems improbable that Jocelin was inspired by the west front which Richard le Poore was then building for his new cathedral of Salisbury. There is reason to think that the heterogeneous western façade of Salisbury is later than that of Wells. The precise nature of his building is somewhat doubtful, but the impression grew upon the writer during his last visit that the Norman work of Bishop Robert was remodelled as later, at Exeter, Bishop Quivil and his successors remodelled the cathedral of their predecessors. The nave, transepts, and the western portion of the choir at Wells give the feeling of Norman work remodelled; there is no question that there is an immense amount of Norman masonry in the building, and the massive bulk of the grouped piers suggests to the writer that they simply replace Norman drum columns of equal diameter, as at Exeter. Indeed, it seems permissible to ask whether the transformation

XIIIth-Century Statues of Two Ecclesiastics on the West Front of Wells Cathedral

of Wells did not serve as the model for that of the Devonian cathedral.

Jocelin's whole policy indicated very clearly that his heart was in his native place; for not only did he almost complete the cathedral, but began to build an episcopal palace. Further, he largely increased the number of prebends—from thirty-five to fifty—built houses for the canons, and provided a regular endowment for the vicars-choral. No doubt in this work, also, Hugh of Lincoln gave his fraternal help, and in 1239, when the cathedral was reconsecrated, it was not merely one of the finest religious edifices in the land, but its special and characteristic secular services were fully organised and adequately maintained.

Having achieved so much, Jocelin de Welles, "full of days, and commendable in life and character," departed from this world on November 19th, 1242, and at once the diocese was thrown into confusion, for the monks of Bath made a last effort to snatch the supremacy. They hurriedly held a chapter, elected to the bishopric Roger, one of their number, and by adroit rapidity and, we may suspect, lavish bribery, secured the royal approval and the papal confirmation, before the Chapter of Wells could effectively intervene. When the canons at last acted it was too late; but an appeal was duly made to the Pope, and in 1244 Innocent IV. delivered a judgment which ended the long antagonism. Roger's election was confirmed, but the title of the diocese was henceforth to be Bath and Wells, and the bishop was to be elected by both chapters. This practically amounted to establishing the

supremacy of Wells, for, though Bishop Roger died and was buried at Bath, all his successors established themselves at Wells, the original seat of the episcopate. Whether any special reasons were put forth by the canons is not known, but I imagine that one factor which must have weighed a good deal with Innocent IV. was that there existed at Wells a noble cathedral, which was not the case at Bath. Roger survived the settlement only three years.

On February 24th, 1247, the monks of Bath and the canons of Wells met in the chapter-house at Bath, and elected William de Button, Archdeacon of Wells, bishop of the conjoint diocese. The first event of his episcopate was an earthquake, which overthrew a new spire—was this the central tower?—and did much damage to the body of the church. Bishop Button probably executed repairs, and may therefore be credited with a share in the building of Wells Cathedral, but otherwise he was not a very creditable prince of the Church, being decidedly quarrelsome and litigious, and very much given to nepotism, pushing members of his family into all kinds of posts in his diocese. His successor was Walter Giffard, one of the great ecclesiastical politicians of the XIIIth century, who held Wells only for a year, after which he was promoted to York. He procured the election as his successor of William de Button, his own cousin, and nephew of William de Button I.

The appointment of the second William de Button was therefore to all appearance a "job," but we may say, with Wellington, that it was a "good job too," for

In the Retro-Choir of Wells Cathedral
Tomb of Bishop John of Drokensford, with (beyond) the supposed tabernacled tomb of Bishop Button I.

Bishop William earned during his seven years' episcopate (1267–74) the well-merited reputation of a saint, though he was never formally canonised. One quaint superstition became associated with the name of this really good man and most exemplary ecclesiastic. He had extremely fine and sound teeth; and the local folk deduced that their beauty and freedom from disease was the due reward of the bishop's saintly life. From this it was but a step to the belief that a visit to his shrine would cure dental ailments. Hence came regular pilgrimages of persons afflicted with such complaints, and a quaint outcrop of sculpture in the cathedral illustrating the general belief.

William de Button was followed by a man of totally different character—another ecclesiastical politician and official, Robert of Burnell, chancellor of Edward I. Burnell's episcopate was long, extending from 1274 to 1292, but in the main it concerns the constitutional history of England rather than the little city in Somerset. Yet he left his mark deeply upon Wells. Under his rule began the final restoration of the cathedral, which left it very much as it is to-day, with the exception of the western towers. He built at his own cost the great hall of the episcopal palace, and procured many privileges for the see and town, adding to the former five new benefices. These benefactions could be confirmed with ease, owing to the statesman-bishop's influence with the great king. It must be said that he was, no doubt, influenced very much by his desire of finding places for his numerous relatives.

Robert of Burnell was certainly a great man, but, equally certainly, a bad Christian pastor. Against his virtues of wisdom and loyalty, and his great capacity for public business, must be set a licentiousness such as disgraced Popes Sixtus IV. and Alexander VI., great greed, and extraordinary nepotism. Yet he was the stateliest figure in the history of Bath and Wells; one of the greatest and most remarkable men in our annals. He was perhaps an ecclesiastic by accident, or rather by necessity, and must not be judged too harshly for his extremely uncanonical vices. Withal he was liberal, affable, accessible to all, and a lover of peace. His body was properly brought back to Wells for burial, but the site of his tomb is lost.

The election of William of March, a canon of Wells, to succeed Robert of Burnell, seems to have been yet another "job," for William was a follower of the late chancellor, and held the high office of Treasurer of England—a harsh and stern treasurer, as it is said; but that is alleged also of Walter de Stapeldon and many another unfortunate who attempted to put some order into the chaotic finances of those barbaric days. However that may be, Bishop William was dismissed in 1295, and retired to his see, where he devoted himself to good works and splendid building. To him Wells owes the magnificent chapter-house and the almost unique staircase which leads up to it, while his life as bishop was such that, after his death in 1324–28, first the chapter, then the entire English episcopate, petitioned the Pope to canonise him. The appeal failed, probably for the reason that England

was not prepared to pay sufficiently heavily for the honour, perhaps for reasons of national repugnance, for the reigning pontiff was the Frenchman John XXII., established at Avignon, and practically a tool of France. William of March probably deserved canonisation as well as hundreds of other ecclesiastics who have obtained it: meanwhile the chapter-house of Wells is a fitting monument to his memory.

Passing over Walter of Haselshaw (1302–8), the see came in 1308 under the rule of John of Drokensford (*i.e.* Droxford in Hampshire), another worldly unbishop-like bishop, who acted very much in his own personal interests, but was nevertheless magnificent and generous, and a benefactor of his cathedral, for it was under him that the central tower and the Lady Chapel were built. So when we look at the beautiful tower from the close, and pass beneath the delicate archways of the retro-choir into the Lady Chapel, let us conveniently forget the worldliness of John of Drokensford. For a short time in 1313 he was Regent of England in the absence of Edward II., but he does not seem to have possessed either the personal disinterestedness or the capacity of his rival Walter de Stapeldon, and, accordingly, "went into opposition." Under him and for the first few years of his successor the dean was John of Godelegh or Godelee, whose zeal in continuing the building and embellishment of the cathedral was great, and fully entitles him to an honoured place beside the builder-bishops.

To John of Drokensford succeeded Ralph of Shrewsbury, Chancellor of the University of Oxford, a man

of totally different stamp — blameless in personal character and one of the most distinguished men of learning of the day. He had to fight for his episcopate, for, while he was elected almost unanimously by the Chapters of Bath and Wells, the Regent Queen Isabella and her paramour Roger Mortimer had intended to appoint Robert of Wyville, afterwards Bishop of Salisbury, while the grasping and meddlesome Pope John XXII. wished to reserve the see for his own appointment—of course for a price. Bishop Ralph had to spend much money to appease the Pope, and was further impoverished by a state visit of Edward III. to Wells at Christmas, 1331. He was sumptuously entertained and expressed his pleasure, but poor Bishop Ralph must have groaned to see the money needed by his diocese spent upon the entertainment of the most ostentatious and magnificent of English mediæval courts.

By 1333 Ralph could attend to his diocesan affairs, and thenceforward, until the close of his long life thirty years later, he was an active and diligent ruler. During the Black Death of 1348–9 he stayed at his post among his perishing flock, living mostly at Wyveliscombe, his favourite manor. He sent out orders for religious observances during the plague which are so liberal and enlightened as to deserve special notice. If the parish priest were dead or skulking —as was not infrequent—the sick might confess to a layman or, in default, to a woman, and a deacon might administer the last sacraments. Two hundred and twenty-eight parish priests died that year—not all

THE UNDERCROFT BENEATH THE CHAPTER-HOUSE OF WELLS CATHEDRAL

It is a plain and massive example of the Early English style, very reminiscent of the lower chambers of Mont St. Michel's Abbey.

of the Death, of course—and at once, on receipt of the tidings, the good bishop instituted a new incumbent, so that the perishing people might never lack the consolations of religion. An even better testimonial to his merits is that he "disafforested" the manors of Cheddar and Axbridge, thus permitting the peasants to destroy the wild beasts, clear ground and commence tillage and grazing, free from the espionage and oppression of the foresters.

As a bishop Ralph was most conscientious in supervising his diocese and reforming abuses. He completed the body of the cathedral, adding the three eastern bays of the choir and building the beautiful retro-choir to connect it with the hitherto detached Lady Chapel. Under him also were constructed those inverted arches which are perhaps the most striking feature of the interior. The piers supporting the central tower were giving way beneath the additional weight imposed upon them by its completion. They were being pressed down into the ground; rents were opening in the masonry and the arches were parting. A convocation was summoned in haste to save the cathedral which, in the quaint language of the proceedings, was *totaliter confracte et enormiter deformate*. The device of the inverted arches warded off the danger of collapse and rendered the tower absolutely stable. The peril had been great, as may be seen by the built-up cracks in the masonry.

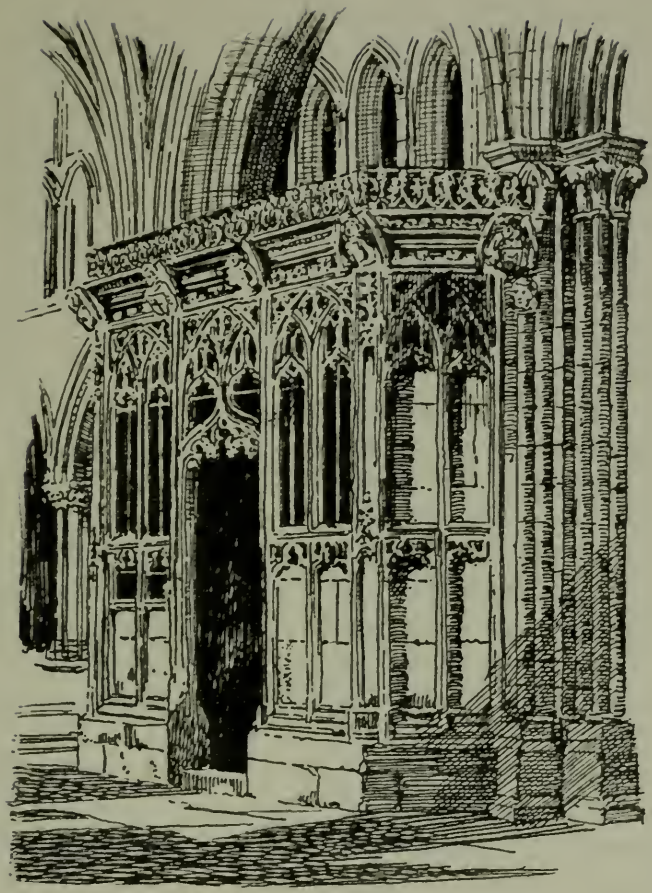
Besides his work in the cathedral, Ralph built the gatehouse of the palace, and surrounded his dwelling with a wall and moat. Last, but not least, he founded

the college of vicars-choral and built for them the range of dwellings still called the Vicars' Close, though the present buildings are, for the most part, of rather later date. Bishop Ralph's rule over the Diocese of Bath and Wells almost exactly synchronised with that of John de Grandisson over Exeter, and both left their churches nearly complete. Ralph of Shrewsbury died in 1363, and was rightly laid to rest in front of the high altar, in the midst of his additions to the choir.

His successor, John of Barnet, held the see for but a few years, but John Harewell presided over it for nearly twenty (1367–86), and left his cathedral enlarged by the addition of the south-western tower. Ralph Erghum (1388–1400) founded a college for the fourteen chantry priests. It was destroyed in the reign of Edward VI., but its memory is still preserved in the little city by the name of College Lane.

Bishop Nicholas Bubwith (1407–24) was responsible for the last addition to the cathedral, by leaving a donation for the building of the north-west tower, and likewise founded and endowed the almshouse, which still survives to perpetuate his memory. He was one of the English deputies to the Church Council of Constance, at which John Huss, the great Czech protestant, was condemned, but it does not seem that he had himself any desire to persecute heretics, for though he received special orders from Archbishop Chicheley to suppress the Lollards, nothing came of them.

His successor, John Stafford, afterwards Arch-



THE XVTH-CENTURY CHANTRY OF BISHOP BUBWITH
IN THE NAVE OF WELLS CATHEDRAL

bishop of Canterbury, was slightly more energetic, and we hear of a certain William Curayn being forced to abjure his heterodox opinions, but that was all. Religious persecution appears to be thoroughly alien from the English national character: practically every episode of this nature in English history has been inspired by rulers or ecclesiastics of foreign extraction.

Stafford was followed in 1443 by Thomas of Beckington, a native of the Somersetshire village of that name. He was then a man between fifty and sixty years of age, having been a student at New College, Oxford, as early as 1406. He seems to have entered public life under the auspices of Henry V.'s somewhat notorious brother Prince Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, the "Good Duke Humphrey" of Shakespeare and the Lancastrian chroniclers, and from about 1423 onwards was actively engaged in politics, both national and ecclesiastical. He was more than once a member of embassies to France, the object of which was to bolster up or retain some fragment of the dwindling conquests of Henry V. For some years he was secretary to Henry VI., and in 1443 was appointed Lord Privy Seal. His last embassy to France, by the way, had just terminated. Its object was to form a matrimonial alliance with the Count of Armagnac, in order thus to obtain support for our tottering dominion in Guienne. King Henry was to marry one of the count's three daughters, but this part of the negotiation collapsed, to some extent because the weather was so bitterly cold that it congealed the colours and numbed the fingers of the artist sent out

to paint the portraits of the three prospective candidates for the uneasy post of Queen of England.

However, the failure did not diminish Beckington's reputation with the king. It is probable that he has really a strong claim to be regarded as the true founder of Eton College, certainly he took the deepest interest in it, and when he was appointed Bishop of Bath and Wells he was consecrated in Eton's old collegiate church, and celebrated his first episcopal mass in the half-finished new church, which was covered in with canvas for the occasion. His episcopate was cast in anxious times, but they did not, as in so many other cases, involve his personal ruin. In 1452 he obtained an exemption from attendance on Parliament on account of age and infirmities, and this privilege was confirmed by Edward IV. at the deposition of Henry VI.

Bishop Beckington's last days must have been darkened by his knowledge of the misfortunes of his royal patron, but he was not molested—and must have been too old to take any active part in attempts to restore the Lancastrian dynasty. He died in peace in January, 1465, and was buried in the fine tomb which he had built for himself in the south aisle of the choir. It was opened in 1850 and the skeleton was found to be that of a tall stately man with a handsome head.

Beckington's name is principally remembered to-day by his many architectural monuments at Wells. He says himself that he expended six thousand marks (about £40,000 in values of 1913) in rebuilding and

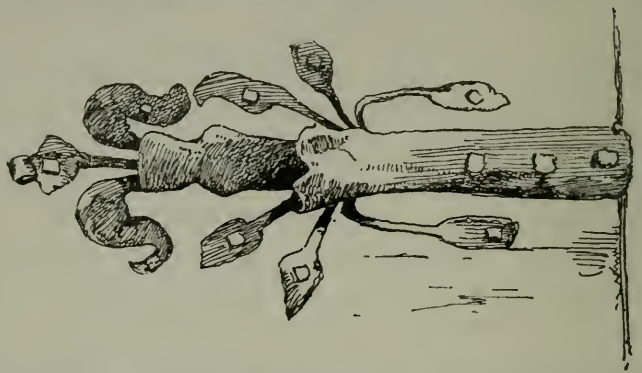
THE CHAIN-GATE BRIDGE OF WELLS CATHEDRAL

This Perpendicular gateway carries the beautiful covered passage from the Chapter-house staircase to the Vicars' Close. It was built by Bishop Beckington.

embellishing the palace and other edifices. To him Wells owes the western and southern galleries of the cloisters, the Vicars' Close as it exists to-day, the Chain-Gate Bridge, the northern block of the palace and the graceful gateway called "The Bishop's Eye." He did much for the town, building fifteen new houses in the market-place and providing a public water conduit and fountain. All these works were not completed in the bishop's lifetime, but all were planned and the cost defrayed by him from his own resources. Probably he was very wealthy—as a public official he must have had many opportunities of acquiring money—but that he made a munificent and, on the whole, judicious, use of his wealth is not to be denied. The mayor and corporation of Wells showed their sense of his benefactions by making an annual visit to his tomb. He was the last great builder at Wells, though a word must be spared for Oliver King (1495–1503) who, moved by a dream while at Bath, began the rebuilding of the ruined Abbey Church in the Late Perpendicular style.

King's successor was the Italian Cardinal Adriano di Castello, who, having been sent to Great Britain more than once on political and ecclesiastical missions by Pope Innocent VIII., ingratiated himself with Henry VII. and Cardinal Morton and, after receiving various appointments and preferments, was made Bishop of Bath and Wells. Adriano was a man of obscure origin, a supple, clever, and cultivated Italian of the Renaissance type, who has earned great fame as a writer and reformer of Latin, and also as a muni-

ficent patron of art, but who cannot justly be described as a very estimable person. He was called at Rome "the Rich Cardinal," and as he was certainly born very poor, it is legitimate to enquire how he acquired his vast fortune. In plain fact it seems that he held many lucrative posts, and was not at all scrupulous about the use which he made of them. Even Henry VII., who gave him his English bishopric, seems to have



Early Hinge-front on a Doorway on the South Side of the Choir of Wells Cathedral

suspected his integrity in financial matters, and his cardinalate, his English episcopate, and his post as receiver of the English Peter pence, all came to an end in 1518, in a very tangle and accumulation of discredit. Adriano's last few years are obscure: he is said to have been murdered in 1521, when on his way to Rome at the death of Pope Leo X., in an attempt to procure the restoration of his cardinalate.

Adriano is the central figure in the curious story of the death of the infamous Pope Alexander VI.

(Rodrigo Borgia) by poison, which the Borgias are said to have prepared for Adriano himself. Di Castello had been created cardinal by Alexander on May 31st, 1503, presumably — or rather almost certainly — in return for a handsome sum of money to finance Cesare Borgia's schemes in Central Italy. It is supposed that the magnitude of the new cardinal's offerings and bribes inspired the Pope and his son with the idea of poisoning him, and recruiting their finances by the confiscation of his wealth. To this end they invited themselves to sup with him at his villa near the Vatican, bringing with them a present for their "friend" of some specially choice wine, carefully poisoned for the occasion. However, by some means or other, the doomed host and guests got wind of the affair, and at the fatal feast the poisoned drink was swallowed by the two Borgias, of whom the Pope died a week later, while Cesare never recovered full health and strength.

The story bristles with improbabilities—not to say impossibilities. The Borgias were, doubtless, terrible villains, but they were not very likely to kill wantonly a man who was one of their supporters, and it is difficult to suppose that they would deliberately run the risk of taking poison by mistake, by attending the banquet themselves—or that the poison which they employed was of such a feeble nature that it took a week or more to kill a man seventy-two years old, and did not kill the son at all. The facts seem to be that the vicious old Pope and the guests generally ate heartily and drank deeply, and then went home in the

malarial atmosphere of a Roman August. Several of them became ill, as might be expected. Adriano himself had what looks like an attack of intestinal inflammation on the day after the feast, and was ill for some time. The only one who actually died was the Pope, and he was the oldest man present, quite apart from the fact that his way of life must by now have exhausted his strength. So, without giving Adriano di Castello the probably quite undeserved credit of having any moral objection to disposing of an enemy by means of assassination, it is not probable that one of the worst Popes on the long list died by poison.

Cardinal Adriano never in his life visited Wells: he merely drew the revenues. His business there seems chiefly to have been managed by his famous countryman, Polydore Vergil, who was appointed archdeacon in 1507. Vergil, however, must, from what is known of his career, have been almost as much an absentee as his superior, but he was not unmindful of the cathedral and presented the choir with a set of rich tapestries.

The hard times of the Dissolution and Reformation were close at hand, and Wells fared no better during them than many other places. The Abbey of Bath was, of course, suppressed, so that the bishop's seat was once more at Wells alone, as it had been before the rule of Jean de Villula—but habit was too strong for conservative Englishmen, and the title of "Bath and Wells" was and is retained.

The most contemptible of the Bishops of Bath and Wells falls into the Reformation period. This was

William Barlow, of whom the less said the better. Some of the worst stories related of him are probably untrue, but that he was a moral coward and a constitutional time-server cannot be doubted, and though his wrecking of his palace at St. David's has been attributed to a desire of fixing the episcopate of South Wales at a more central place like Carmarthen, there is much which leads to the conclusion that Barlow in this and other deeds of destruction and plunder was actuated by motives of greed.

All this time public history little affected the quiet atmosphere of the little cathedral city by the springs. Once only, in 1471, was there a chance that it might be the scene of a memorable event—this was when Queen Marguerite of Anjou marched through it with her army on the way to her last field. With a few days' difference Wells might have witnessed the slaughter and political murder which actually befell at Tewkesbury.

Barlow was followed by Gilbert Bourne, the last Bishop of Wells of the Roman Church, who naturally ended his life in captivity in 1569. His second successor was Thomas Godwin (1584–90), who wrote a history of Wells. James Montague (1608–16) and Arthur Lake (1616–26) were much occupied with attacking and resisting the contemporary Puritanism, but Lake was a peculiarly upright Christian ruler, who probably deserved the honour of canonisation as well as many other ecclesiastics.

William Piers (1632–70) was a pronounced and violent Laudian who combined ritualistic elaboration

and Puritan-harrying with a strong regard for his own interests. He saw his work entirely undone by the Civil War and the Republican Government, by which he was first imprisoned and then deprived. He lived to be restored in 1660 and to sit as Bishop of Bath and Wells for no less than ten years longer, though already eighty years old. Whatever good work was effected in the diocese during these years was mainly due to Dean Robert Creyghton, who succeeded his aged superior as bishop in 1670, but only for two years. Creyghton was followed by Peter Mews, quite a remarkable man, "an old honest Cavalier," who began as a gentleman private in Charles I.'s troop of Life Guards. A steady royalist, with an almost fanatical sense of his duty as a subject as well as a priest, Mews was no sycophant, and when necessary could take a firm line. Though he owed much to James II. he never hesitated over his action in regard to that monarch's tyrannical measures, and only the fact that he was seriously ill and broke down completely on his way to London prevented Mews from adding an eighth to the group of seven bishops in 1688.

No doubt that which has rendered Bishop Mews most famous or notorious is the fact that in Monmouth's rebellion in 1685 he lent his own horses to draw the royal artillery, and himself went on to the field of Sedgmoor to direct the fire of the raw gunners, with the result that he was seriously wounded. His action has been severely condemned, but it is only fair to say that almost everyone in England whose opinion carried any weight considered Monmouth's

revolt absolutely ill-timed and unjustified. The bishop, also, did his best to save life during the military and judicial atrocities which succeeded the battle.

Dr. Mews presided over Bath and Wells until 1684, when he was translated to Winchester. His successor was the famous Thomas Ken, of whom Macaulay has placed upon record the opinion that his character approached more nearly to the ideal of Christian perfection than any other in history. Thomas Ken, who was forty-seven years old at the time of his appointment, was a slender, dark-faced, black-eyed man of most amiable and winning appearance, wearing his own dark flowing hair instead of the huge periwig of the period. Though cultivated, a linguist and a musician, he was not especially learned in his profession: his influence was due above everything to his exalted personal character, which impressed even a cynic like Charles II. He was no respecter of persons. In 1679 he was appointed chaplain to Princess Mary, wife of William of Orange. His courage was quickly displayed. William was notoriously unfaithful to his youthful bride, and Ken did not spare his remonstrances: he would do his duty, he said, if the prince kicked him out of doors. William was furious, and his fury increased when Ken set himself to reform the morals of the Dutch court, and persuaded the prince's kinsman, Count Willem Henryk Zuylestein, to marry an English girl, Miss Jane Worth, whom he had seduced and then deserted, after the fashion of fine gentlemen of those days. It is regrettable to record that William himself approved of his relative's dis-

creditable conduct, and was violently enraged with the brave English priest, though in the end he seems to have been shamed into reluctant admiration. Ken was no more afraid of offending his own monarch: when, in 1683, Charles II. visited Winchester and Ken's prebendal house was requisitioned for Nell Gwynn, he sternly refused to admit the royal mistress.

According to all precedents Ken's conduct should have been his ruin: actually the reverse was the case. Charles, with all his faults, had in him a certain capacity of admiration for the probity in which he and most of his courtiers were so terribly wanting, and when, in 1684, Dr. Mews was transferred from Wells to Winchester, the king appointed Ken to the vacant see. The story goes that there were other candidates, but that Charles stood out for Ken, declaring: "Oddsfish! that little black fellow who refused Nell a lodging is the bishop for me." So Dr. Thomas Ken became Bishop of Bath and Wells at a crisis of English history.

And for the first and last time in its peaceful history Wells was drawn violently into the vortex of the troubles of the period. Ken had hardly settled himself in his diocese when his good-humoured, though unprincipled, king died. Ken was with him at the end: and the touching solemnity of his exhortations to the dying monarch is said to have moved some of the worst of the hardened courtiers of that vile court to tears. On top of the news of Charles's death came the western rebellion, raised by his natural son James, Duke of Monmouth.

After moving through Dorsetshire and Somersetshire to Taunton, and failing to capture Bristol, the rebels retreated to Wells, and celebrated their entry by such actions as might be expected from a promiscuous gathering of rude peasants and craftsmen, mostly with Puritanical sympathies. They tore the lead from the roof of the cathedral in order to make bullets, but this was defensible enough in an army which lacked ammunition. But during their brief stay they not only stabled their horses in the venerable edifice, but did their best to destroy the statuary on the wonderful façade, defiled the church with drunken orgies, and would have destroyed the high altar but for Monmouth's second in command, Lord Grey of Wark, afterwards Earl of Tankarville, who took his stand before it sword in hand and shamed the ruffians away.

Ken was in London at this time, and when the unhappy Monmouth was brought thither a doomed captive, the good bishop attended him in the Tower and on the scaffold, and did his utmost, according to his lights, to bring him to die in a Christian frame of mind. To the writer this part of Ken's conduct seems less admirable than many other episodes of his life, but there is no doubt that he believed himself to be discharging a sacred duty. Far more to his lasting honour was his conduct to the hapless prisoners of Sedgmoor, who had defiled his cathedral, who hated him, who had done him wrongs which he had never provoked. He used all his influence to procure the poor doomed wretches better treatment, and im-

poverished himself to provide them with proper food and medical attendance. It was the fairest chapter in the life of a really good man and a truly practising Christian—as Macaulay very justly pronounced.

After 1685 the turmoil of the times passed away from Wells, and left it in peace to this day. The best, it may be, of its bishops presided over the see for six years more, but, though he withstood the tyranny of James II., he could not bring himself to swear allegiance to William III., and was accordingly deprived. It is quite certain that he was on the verge of taking the oaths, and only gave way to his scruples at the last moment. It cannot be doubted that he was in error. The rest of the nonjuring bishops were mere ecclesiastics, and the Church of England could exist without them—but Ken was a Christian saint, and it was a sad thing that his flock lost him owing to his political prejudices.

His successor, Richard Kidder, was a man with Puritanical tendencies and, though upright and disinterested, had a most unhappy and troubled episcopal career, culminating in a violent death. He and his wife were killed by the fall of a stack of chimneys blown down upon them during the terrible hurricane of November 26th, 1703. The way was now open for the restoration of Ken, since Queen Anne was on the throne and he had no objection to owning allegiance to her. How he satisfied his conscience the writer cannot understand, for surely her sister Mary was as rightfully queen as Anne—but this is merely one of the small spots on the white shield of a good

man. At any rate he declined to return, being old and ailing, and recommended his friend Dr. George Hooper. Bishop Hooper was not unworthy of his friend, but after his death in 1727 came a weary succession of political absentees, whose names are unworthy of more than bare mention. In the XIXth century matters improved, and presently the restoration of the neglected cathedral was taken in hand. It cannot be said that these works have been especially wise or tasteful, but doubtless they helped to preserve what was falling into decay, and Wells Cathedral is at least to-day in good repair—a worthy monument of the days when religious art was a work of love.

CHAPTER II

WELLS CATHEDRAL—DESCRIPTIVE

Exterior—Interior—Nave—Choir—Chapter-House—Cloisters—Chain-Gate Bridge—Bishop's Palace—St. Cuthbert's Church

It is probably true that among all the cathedral churches of England, if not indeed among the cathedrals of the whole world, that of St. Andrew of Wells holds the pre-eminence as a perfect example of a secular church with its subordinate buildings intact in themselves and complete as a body. Professor Freeman declared that in no other place could be seen so many of the ancient ecclesiastical buildings still standing and devoted to their legitimate purpose. It is certainly true, also, that very few churches in our island are blessed with a more beautiful setting. That of Salisbury is perhaps more imposing, lying as it does in the midst of the park-like enclosure of Richard le Poore, but Wells is hardly less secluded, and there is an old-world religious atmosphere about its encircling gardens and buildings which is less apparent at Salisbury. Moreover, quite apart from its overwhelming and slightly over-rated west front, and

despite much ill-judged and ill-executed restoration, there is that in Wel s Cathedral which sets it very high among the beautiful edifices of Europe. And this beauty is combined with much of strength. The writer, it is true, must confess to being totally at variance with Mr. W. D. Howells, who declared that for the loveliness of Wells there was no word but "feminine." His meaning is not quite clear; apparently it is that feminine beauty is the highest form of loveliness. From that opinion, so far as architecture is concerned, the writer must strongly dissent. The beauty of Wells is almost everywhere that of masculine vigour: the least satisfactory parts of the structure are precisely those in which femininity is most apparent. And the word is surely misapplied to a structure which was entirely the work of men—conceived, built, adorned by men. If feminine beauty there be in Wells, it was devised by the opposite sex —but almost everything in and about the great church bears the stamp of masculinity.

The Exterior

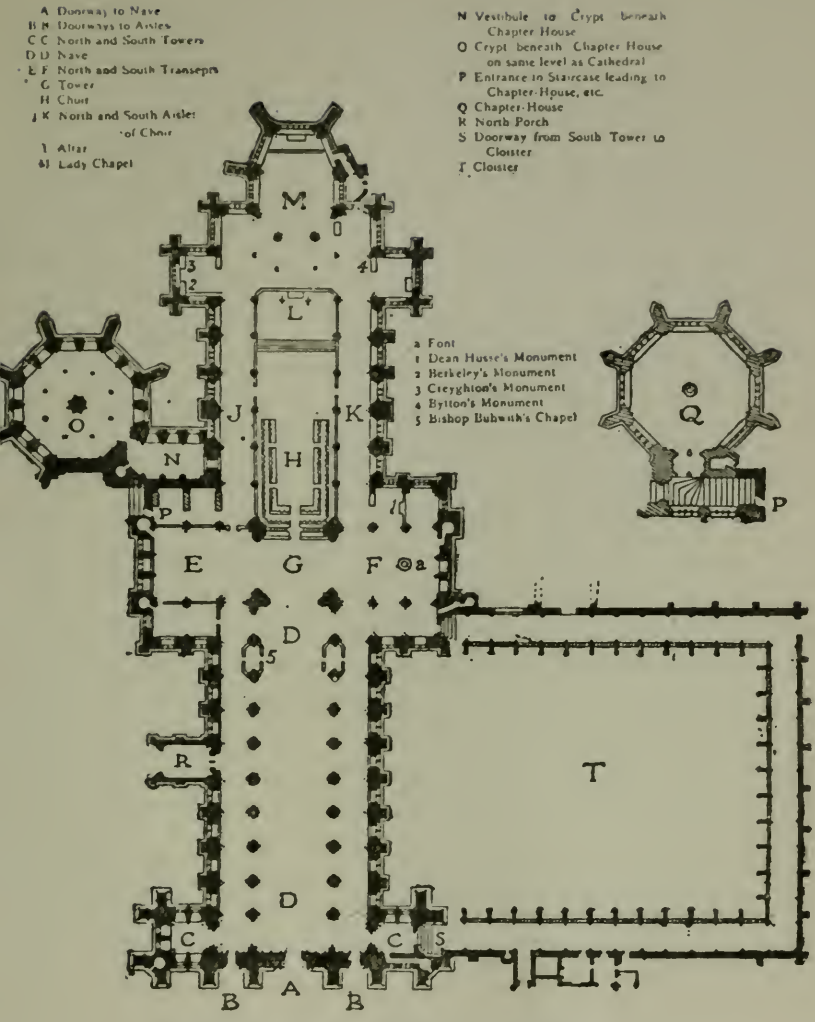
For those who have not actually visited Wells, the cathedral is known principally, if not entirely, by its gorgeous, statue-bedecked West Front. The wide screen, with its projecting turret-like buttresses, enriched almost to weariness with niches and images, with its small doorways, cowering, as it were, beneath the overshadowing magnificence above them; the

ornate centre gable; and the peculiarly contoured towers on either hand, are familiar to many who have never seen them and do not at all realise what lies behind.

St. Andrew's Cathedral of Wells is a secular church, complete with all its appurtenances: it comprises a nave with aisles; transepts; a choir with aisles; a Lady Chapel and two transeptal chapels; a north porch; two western towers and a central tower. On its north side is a superb chapter-house, and, to the south, a cloister of three sides. On the south is the Bishop's Palace, stil[1] nearly intact, though restored—an almost perfect specimen of the dwelling of a mediæval magnate, enclosed by walls and foss; while on the north are the Deanery; the Archdeaconry; the Prebendal House; and the unique "Vicars' Close," now appropriated to the use of theological students. After seven centuries of stress and unpeace, Wells Cathedral exists to this day with all its satellites about it.

The all-familiar view is that of the West Front, and, this being so, it must first be considered, though as a scene it has little to recommend it, the eye being wholly occupied in studying the vast screen with its wealth of statuary, so that criticism of the front is forgotten.

Nevertheless a calm survey of the façade is of the first importance. Concerning its beauties of detail there cannot be two opinions; the artistic merit of its statuary is beyond doubt higher than anything else which the age produced. Of this more will presently be said.



GROUND-PLAN OF WELLS CATHEDRAL

THE WEST FRONT OF WELLS CATHEDRAL

It is the earliest of the great Gothic facades of Europe, having been built by Bishop Jocelin, who died in 1242. The style is pure Early English.

When its details are considered dispassionately and one by one, it is difficult indeed to cast the stone of adverse criticism against them. Doorways, windows, niches are, with scarcely an exception, chastely graceful in contour and in ornamentation, both remarkably beautiful and fancifully grotesque as the mind of the sculptor swayed him. The statuary is for the time without equal, whether the figures be considered individually or as a whole. In short, regarded as a mass of details, the great Screen-Façade of Wells cannot be surpassed.

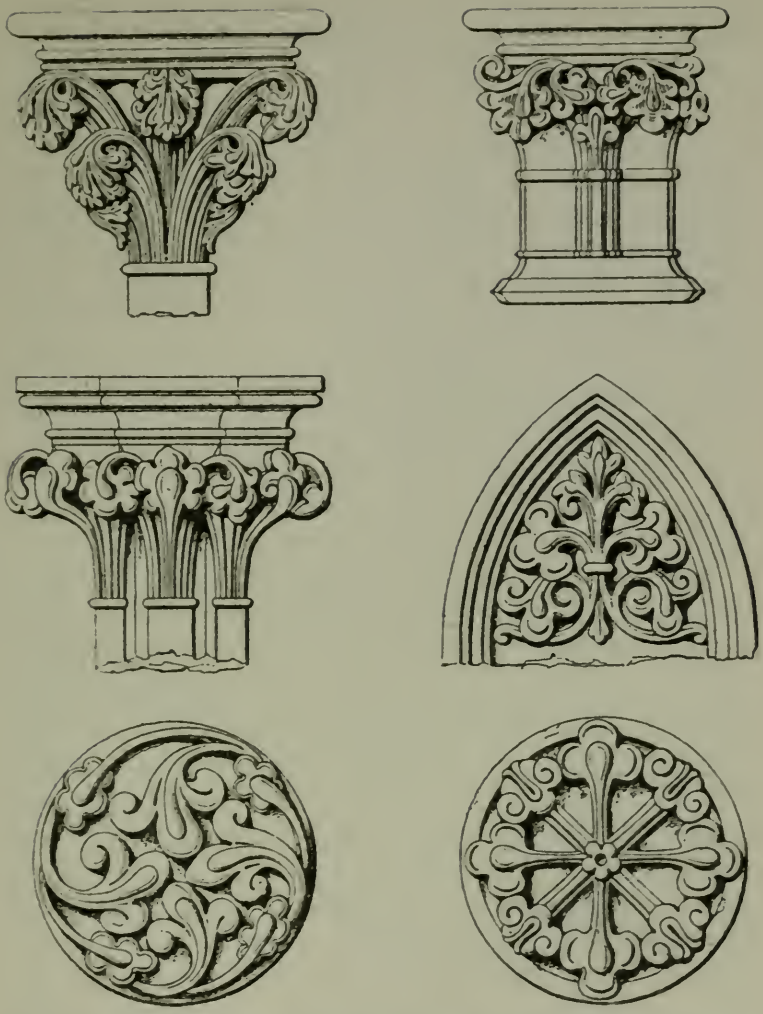
But as a front it is open to more than one cogent objection. In the first place it is not quite *real*: screen though it be, its wings screen nothing, for the towers are actually outside the body of the church, although, looking directly at the vast expanse of statued niches, one would say that they merely cap it. Therefore it must be pronounced that the great glory of Wells Cathedral is actually a false, almost a fraudulent, architectural conception. All defences which have been made of it on this ground have little weight; the characteristic laudation of it, such as that of Dr. Dearmer, is usually of a semi-religious and sentimental type and hardly affects the issue. A screen which covers nothing is not a legitimate artistic device.

Considered in detail also the erection has some considerable shortcomings. It must, I think, be obvious to any intelligent observer that it is too low in proportion to its width. Though it possesses a fairly substantial plinth it appears to rise too abruptly from the ground level and to assume an aspect of top-

heaviness, even if it be granted that this feeling is partly due to the plundered emptiness of the lowest tier of canopied niches. The jumbling together and cutting away of the niches about the arch of the central door are painful; and the door itself is far too small for symmetry or dignity, while the flanking entries are quite pitiable in their insignificance. It really appears as if the architect set out to design a screen and, having determined so much, literally damned all the other consequences. He allowed the idea of a screen absolutely to dominate that of a façade, with the result that the West Front is an artistic failure. He allowed the principle of a façade so far to intrude itself into the idea of a screen that he pushed three petty doorways into it—and thereby spoiled his main design. No doubt he was between the devil and the deep sea, and in consequence was forced to tread the treacherous sands of compromise.

It "will not do," as Wellington would have said, to allow the West Front of Wells to stand upon its merits as a screen, for an erection which has six massive buttresses along its face cannot be reckoned a screen at all. It is a statue-encrusted façade, carried across the fronts of the twin towers, and by its merits and demerits as a façade it must be judged. Its demerits are extremely apparent: its merits are those of admirable detail.

For its demerits there is one most ample apology. It is the earliest of the gorgeous Gothic façades which were presently to cover Western Europe. The earliest of the magnificent statued porches of France, justly



Sculptured Details of the West Front of Wells Cathedral

accounted the crowning glory of Gothic art, are later by more than half a century. Therefore, with all its defects, the façade of Wells stands alone—a solitary precursor of greater things.

And when its details are carefully perused it is seen to be without a rival. Its art is everywhere delicate, chaste, and at the same time dignified and restrained. It is, no doubt, a matter of taste, and comparisons are proverbially invidious—but the writer's opinion is that Christian art should convey the idea of peace, and more than one of the gorgeous French façades have irritated him by reason of their bewildering mass of decoration. Religious feeling, doubtless, is there—but it is a somewhat wild, emotional sentiment, alien to the spirit of the Founder of Christianity. Nor is decoration by any means always pure art. At Wells there is enough, and not too much, of elaboration—except, it may be, in the central gable. No doubt the environment of Wells, as of many another English cathedral, adds very much to its charm—but yet charm is never a word which would occur to me in connection with it. I shall always remember the beautiful church as I last saw it, on a brilliant autumn morning after a yesterday of rain. The sky was almost cloudless, and of that pure blue which is only seen in the aftermath of a storm: the turf glittered with the diamond-sparkle of innumerable raindrops: and beyond its emerald expanse the wonderful frontage rose in solemn beauty, seeming to proclaim to the beholder the oft-forgotten watchword of the Christian faith—"Peace on earth."

There is no carelessness, no scamped work, no mechanical repetition on the great façade: the smallest details are worked out with loving industry; everywhere is evident the freedom of poetic fancy. They were artists indeed who wrought the West Front of this cathedral: if there are defects of general conception, there are none of detail. The lowest tier of twin canopied niches, though it has suffered the most at the hands of brutal iconoclasm, is perhaps the finest thing in the whole design: the outline of the central doorway is delicious. The excellences of the upper tiers are not so easy to appreciate, but the more they are studied the more does the impression gain upon one that the great ideals of purity of outline and delicate fancy of ornament are hardly ever forgotten, though some of the niches are noticeably more graceful than others, just as some of the statues rise far above their comrades in artistic merit.

It is a little difficult to assign an organisation to the great mass of sculpture, and the ninefold division made by most writers is rather confusing. Looking at the façade as a whole it becomes apparent that it consists of three main stages:

1. The Base or lowest stage.
2. The Superstructure or principal stage.
3. The Gable.

Each of these main stages contains three systems of statued niches; but they cannot truthfully be described as tiers, because the arrangement of the Base consists of a single tier of twin niches with

THE SCULPTURED GROUPS OF THE CENTRAL ENTRANCE OF THE WESTERN FAÇADE OF WELLS CATHEDRAL

In the upper recess is shown Christ crowning His Mother, and in the lower the Virgin and Child.

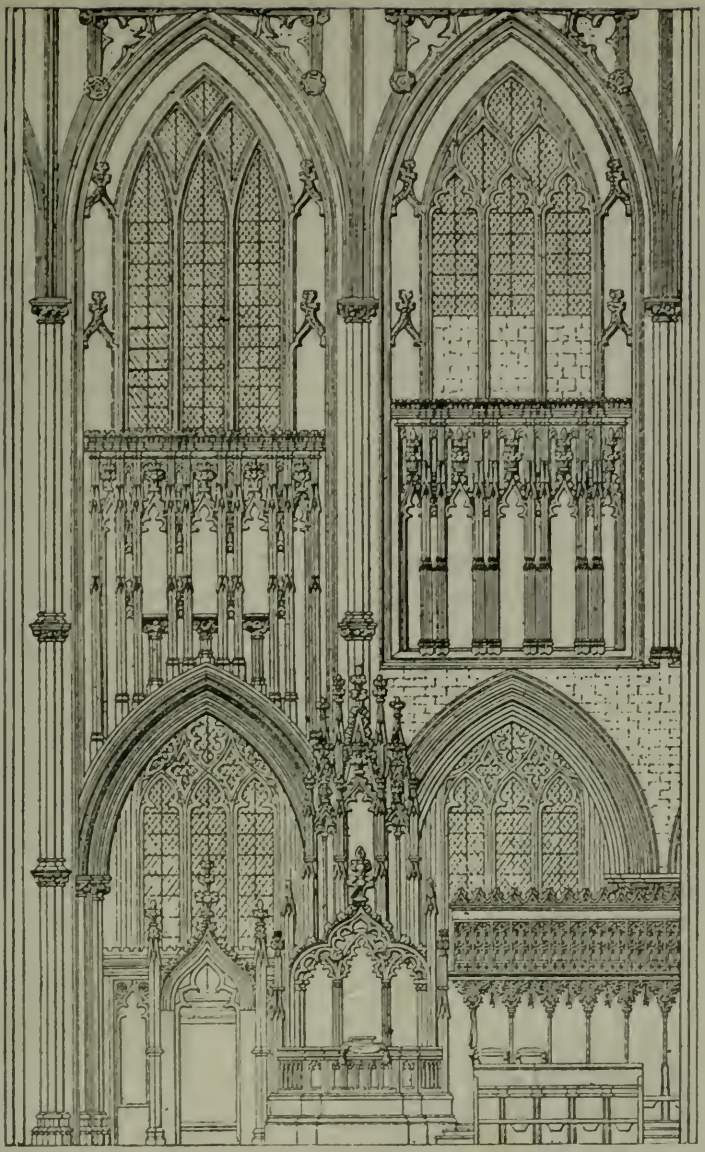
elaborations. The Superstructure is a single conception; architecturally it comprises a tall arcade crowned by a cornice, while decoratively it has four tiers and not three. The Gable, on the other hand, has nothing obscure about it, consisting as it does simply of three tiers one above another.

THE BASE consists of a tier of twin niches surmounted by gables, each gable containing a quatrefeuille filled with a sculptured group. Between the gables is another row of quatrefeuilles, likewise encircling episodes carven in stone. This is independent of the tympanum of the central doorway arch and the awkwardly-placed niche above it. The former was adorned with what must have been a most graceful group of the Virgin and Child; the latter with a representation of Christ crowning His Mother.

From forty-three of the sixty-two twin niches the statuary has vanished, destroyed by Protestant barbarians between 1540 and 1660—a few, possibly, in 1685 by Monmouth's rude levies. Identification is absolutely impossible as regards those which remain: it is probable that all the niches were originally filled with statues of the principal Christian saints. The quatrefeuilles in the gables contained half-length angels: some of these have disappeared. The forty-eight quatrefeuilles between the gables were filled with biblical episodes, beginning with the Creation and continuing (probably) to the Exodus, as far as the Old Testament is concerned. These are on the south side, the Creation being nearest to the central doorway. On the other side are New Testament

episodes commencing, very finely and appropriately, with an Angel announcing the Good Tidings, followed by the Annunciation and the Birth of Christ, continuing to the Passion and ending with the Resurrection and the Day of Pentecost. Many of them, especially those which contain the representation of St. Mary, have been shamefully defaced: the Crucifixion scenes are battered almost to destruction.

The Superstructure contains three tiers of statuary, two of them forming the decoration of the main arcade, the third the cornice. The two former may be treated as one, since they unquestionably are a single composition. Originally they comprised over one hundred and twenty figures, of which one hundred and ten or thereabouts remain more or less intact. They plainly represent historical characters, but no successful identification can be furnished: those which have been attempted are manifestly full of errors. For example, one (No. 116 in that of Dr. Dearmer) is a bearded royal figure holding a cup. Cockerell, in his *Iconography of Wells*, called it King Edward the Martyr, and Dr. Dearmer thinks this ascription very likely. And yet if one thing were more likely to be better known than another to monastic chroniclers, it was that King Edward was a beardless boy of barely sixteen at the time of his murder. Yet another king, trampling on his foes, is called Aethelred the Redeless —Aethelred the Redeless, who all his life was doing the absolute reverse! The truth is that, since no record has survived of the design of the sculptors, no identification can be attempted: it is only certain that the



DETAIL OF TWO BAYS OF THE CHOIR OF WELLS CATHEDRAL

From a drawing by G. Cattermole.

gures all obviously represent royal and princely ersonages of both sexes, together with saints, and ıale and female ecclesiastical dignitaries. So much ; clear; all else is uncertain.

That which is not at all uncertain is the marvellously igh artistic merit of the statues. Some, of course, are etter than others, but most are really admirable. 'laxman, a pronounced classicalist, was emphatic in is commendation of these works of mediæval sculpure: Ruskin rated them as little inferior to the tatuary of Amiens Cathedral—and, be it remembered, ıey are some fifty years earlier, if not more. It has een suggested that they must be the work of Italian culptors. The only reason seems to be that Arabic umerals have been found upon some of the figures on ıe north side of the screen. Arabic numerals were ıtroduced into Italy about 1202 by the famous ıathematician Leonardo of Pisa (Leonardo Bonacci), ıe associate of the Emperor Friedrich II.; but conervative England continued to employ Roman noation down to the XVIth century. Further, it is ointed out, the sculpture of Wells is contemporaneous ith the commencement of the revival of classical rt in Italy by Niccola Pisano.

This reasoning is not very conclusive. The Arabic umerals upon the figures may not be contemporary: they are, they only prove, at best, that some of the tatuary upon the north side was executed by foreign rtists. But they really prove nothing more than ıat Bishop Jocelin had a supervisor who was acuainted with Arabic numerals and preferred to use

them. He need not have been a foreigner, but a travelled Englishman.

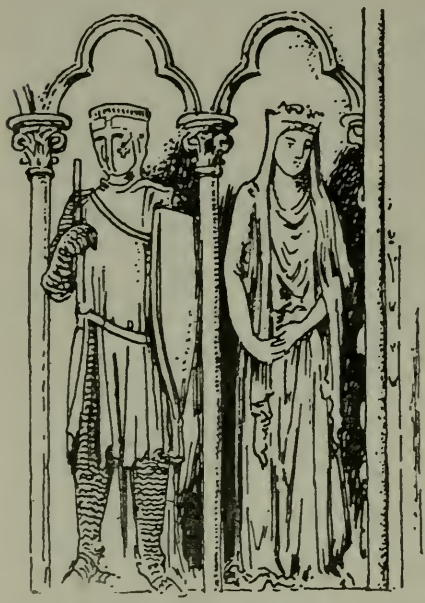
The artistic quality of the work does not necessarily imply Italian artists. The building of the West Front of Wells probably commenced about 1218. Pisano was then only twelve, and his activity did not commence until many years later. If the possibility be admitted that the statues were executed at a period subsequent to the actual construction of the front, it may be granted that pupils of Pisano came to Wells to give their aid in the embellishment of the cathedral. But if, as seems far more probable, the statuary was executed contemporaneously with the building, the inference is that there were English sculptors capable of producing work of a merit little inferior to that of Pisano, while that master was still at the commencement of his artistic career. It is highly improbable that as early as 1220–30 Italian sculptors not only reached England, but went westward to secluded Wells.

The whole question is complicated by the fact that depreciation of English talent in the world of art, no less than in the realms of literature, politics and war, has always been a kind of mania with foreign critics, and their work has been aided by the lack of self-assertion, combined with haughty shyness, which is an English characteristic. In practical politics England has led the world for many centuries, and leads it to this day. Pre-eminence in warlike science may be conceded, without jealousy, to France and Germany. There is some human quality in the Anglo-Briton which has happily prevented him from producing

many masters of scientific destruction. As to literature, England need fear comparison with no nation of post-Roman Europe; and in the dominion of art it is slowly becoming apparent to all careful students that she was never far behind her continental sisters, and sometimes very much in front. In the matter of bulk she possibly failed, but bulk and artistic merit are two very different things—as the Greeks realised twenty-four centuries ago. The Parthenon and the Erechtheum together would be lost inside St. Peter's at Rome, but beside either of them huge St. Peter's is a poor affair. England's cathedrals may for the most part be small, but many of them are of compelling beauty. Wells is tiny beside Amiens, but it was built almost a century earlier. The West Front was completed at least forty years before the pride of France, and some of its statues are as fine as anything in the later building, while in the latter there is nothing which surpasses in combined strength and beauty the grouped columns of Wells with their delicious capitals. Since there were in England artists capable of producing such examples of delicate sculpture in the XIIth century, it is hard to understand why there should not by 1230 have arisen a group of statuaries able to execute the figures which fill the many niches of the front.

The figures certainly vary in merit. Some of them are somewhat squat and heavy: others, like those purporting to represent Fulk of Jerusalem and Robert of Normandy, tend to slenderness, especially about the legs. The figures called King John and Henry III. are extremely well-proportioned and dignified: they

are the portrayals of kings indeed. The most beautiful of all is probably that called Abbess Christina of Romsey: it may be slightly too elongated, but the folds of the drapery are faultless: they might have been sculptured by a Greek artist of the Golden Age of Hellas. The attitude is full of natural grace: the face so well drawn, calm and worshipful in expression. The man who sculptured this exquisite figure had little to learn: he was truly a master of his art.



FEMALE FIGURE POSSIBLY INTENDED FOR THE LADY AETHELFLAED, DAUGHTER OF ALFRED THE GREAT, AND A KNIGHT IN CHAIN ARMOUR, ON THE WEST FRONT

The cornice of the Superstructure is formed by a tier of low canopied niches, filled with a very quaint and weird series of nude figures representing the Resurrection of the Dead on the Day of Judgment. There are kings, bishops and monks. The anatomy is defective, but the expression of the faces is most striking in its variety, ranging from absolute serenity to the wildness of complete despair. It is wonderful to think that this strange and impressive work of art,

quite devoid of grotesqueness or false sentiment, was produced early in the XIIIth century in this then remote corner of our "nook-shotten isle of Albion." [1]

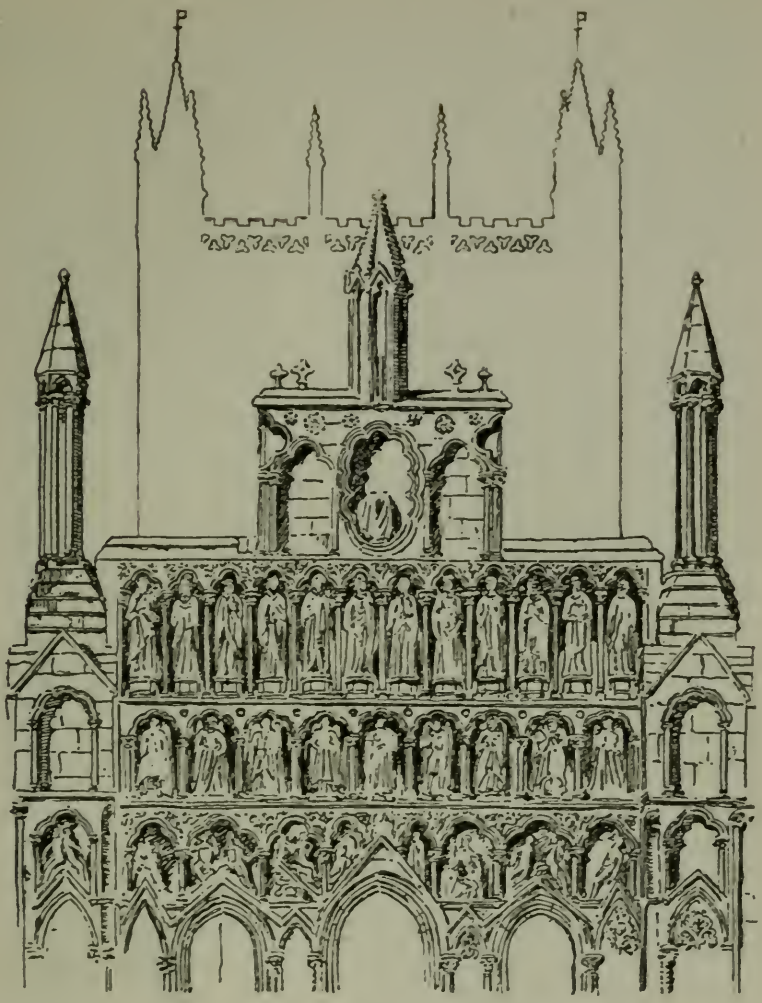
ELEVEN PANELS FROM THE RESURRECTION TIER OF THE WEST FRONT OF WELLS CATHEDRAL

The lowest stage of the Gable consists of a tier of nine low niches, containing figures which probably represent the nine orders of the Heavenly Guardians.

[1] *Henry V.*, Act. III. Scene v.

Above it is a range of twelve tall canopied niches, each holding the statue of an apostle. The seventh figure, counting from left to right, is that of St. Andrew. For the honour of the cathedral he was made taller than his fellows, so that his high head almost touches the crown of the canopy. The rest are not readily to be identified, but St. John, with his smooth face, and St. James the Great appear unquestionable. The figures are to all appearance later than those below, which is otherwise very much than what would be expected—but to the writer they have not the charm of some of those beneath.

The Gable was fitly crowned by what may be surmised to have been a representation of the Saviour in Glory, flanked by His Mother and St. John the Baptist. The figures must have been worthy of the design, but only the lower part of the central one remains. All were intact when Dugdale compiled his *Monasticon*, and therefore they survived the Civil War. The group must then have been destroyed by Monmouth's army in 1685. It is easy to see how the deed was done. The rebels tore the lead from the cathedral's roof to make bullets, and when thus occupied they could readily reach over the parapet and wrench the flanking statues from their position with crowbars. The central one was not so easily reached, but they battered its upper portion to pieces while musketeers below shot at the figure of Him whom they professed to worship, as is evident by the bullet-marks. It was a disgusting business, and the writer confesses, after viewing the ruin, to have come away with a feeling



THE GABLE OF THE WEST FRONT OF WELLS CATHEDRAL

Showing the twelve Apostles and (above, mutilated) Christ in Glory.

that possibly something might be said for rude Percy Kirke at least, though hardly for Chief Justice Jeffreys.

Of the architectural shortcomings of the splendid front enough has been said. The last word will probably be that, in spite of them, it is wonderfully magnificent and, as a whole, deeply impressive by reason of the loving care and artistic fancy which have been lavished upon its details. It is the earliest work of its kind in Christendom, and it is England's own.

The towers require comparatively little notice. They are not quite identical: it will at once be seen that the one on the north has canopied niches, which its sister lacks. The latter was built about 1375–85 by Bishop Harewell; the former some fifty years later by Bishop Stafford, the money having been bequeathed by his predecessor Nicholas Bubwith. In its northern niche is a statue of Bubwith in prayer; the other is empty, but may have held, or have been intended to hold, a figure of Stafford. The outline of the towers is peculiar and not especially pleasant: the buttresses are carried up to about two-thirds of the height and terminate in small pinnacles. Each has a stair-turret on its outward western corner. The general effect is one of incompleteness, but in what the completion would have consisted it is difficult to say: possibly the towers were designed to carry spires; but it is much to be questioned if this would have been an improvement: their soaring height would surely have accentuated the lowness which is the architectural defect of the front. A peal of eight bells occupies the belfry chamber of the Harewell tower.

There is perhaps something to be said for those who feel with Professor Freeman, and find a relief from the gorgeous magnificence of the West Front in the simple beauty of the nave and transepts, viewed from the north-west, with the delightfully picturesque Chain-Gate or covered bridge bounding the immediate outlook to the left, and the chapter-house rising beyond it. In the foreground the north porch presents itself to the gaze, and in the midst of the group the central tower rears its clearly outlined mass and delicate pinnacles against the sky. The severe beauty of nave and transepts is admirably relieved by the exquisite, yet simple, Decorated parapets which ornament the eaves of both.

The North Porch apparently often escapes the notice of sightseers who have sated their eyes with the magnificence of the West Front, but it is probably the most interesting architectural feature in Wells. It is built in a very archaic Early English style, just emerging from Romanesque. But for its pointed arches it might be called Romanesque without cavil—and indeed, when viewing this side of the cathedral, the impression grows that it is a Norman edifice remodelled. The porch is frankly a puzzle to the writer, who has a strong opinion that it is really part of Bishop Robert's Norman cathedral with Early English additions and insertions. The doorway is composed of almost pure Romanesque receding piers, crowned by an arch-recess which is Romanesque in everything but its pointed outline. Not only this, but the arch is so much too tall and heavy for the columns that it has every

THE EXTERIOR OF THE CHAPTER-HOUSE STAIRCASE AND PART OF THE NORTH TRANSEPT OF WELLS CATHEDRAL

On the right is the clock with figures in armour which strike the hours.

appearance of having replaced a rounded one. Finally, the gable looks very much like a remodelled addition.

The beauty of the interior is remarkable, and must be studied in order to receive its full meed of admiration. It may be called either the triumphal entry of Early English or the swan-song of Transitional Norman. As a composition, though the general outline is one of austere grace, the doorway is hardly successful, but beyond doubt no feature of the cathedral is so full of interest and beautiful detail as this decidedly mysterious porch.

Another view not to be despised is that from the south-east. The grouping gives the impression of three independent buildings. In the centre is the cruciform cathedral crowned by its stately tower: on the left the Harewell tower has the effect of a detached "campanile" of the Italian type. It is balanced in the opposite quarter by the octagonal mass of the chapter-house, with its delicate pinnacles and parapet. In the south-eastern foreground the Lady Chapel acts harmoniously as a connecting-link between the cathedral and the chapter-house. The one weak feature in the composition is the east end of the choir. The "feminine" weakness of the three bays of Ralph of Shrewsbury is extremely apparent when contrasted with the fine cleanly-cut masculinity of Reginald's work: and the appearance of the flying buttresses is to the writer most unpleasant. For all which they convey of artistry they might as well be timber shores.

The view from St. Andrew's Spring—that is to say, from a point lower down and a little farther east—

eliminates the chapter-house and much of the Harewell tower. The grace and beauty of the Lady Chapel are greatly enhanced. The aggressive stone "struts" cannot be eliminated, and any view in this direction is more or less troubled by them. With that exception the impression gained is one of stern majesty and severe beauty, with a touch of softer loveliness added by the Decorated parapets which crown the walls both of the main building and the aisles.

In every one of the views, except that from the west, the central tower is the dominating feature. It seems to have a peculiar individuality of its own. Like the rest of the cathedral of Reginald and Jocelin, excepting always the West Front, it appears to combine Romanesque and Gothic characteristics in a very curious manner. It has the distant aspect of a Norman building conspicuous by bulk rather than height, and for all the delicacy of its Gothic arcading and terminal pinnacles, it has a distinct feeling of sternness. It is a steel sword in a velvet scabbard, and the steel is extremely apparent.

The Interior

Entering through the great screen the Nave lies before the visitor; and at once the eye is seized and held by the famous inverted arches, but, apart from this, the strongly individual characteristics of the building very speedily make themselves apparent. Though the arches are Gothic their feeling is not that

THE SOUTH-EAST ASPECT OF WELLS CATHEDRAL
Viewed from the margin of St. Andrew's Spring.
From a drawing by Herbert Railton.

THE NAVE OF WELLS CATHEDRAL

Showing a pair of the great inverted arches inserted under the tower in 1338 by Bishop Ralph of Shrewsbury when signs of approaching collapse became evident.

of true Gothic art; the delicate richness of the capitals contrasts strongly with the massive character of the piers: the triforium is a continuous arcade, not separated into independent bays as is usual. There is no doubt that this continuous arrangement of the triforium helps to convey an impression of length, but it is difficult to say that this is achieved without the loss of a sense of height.

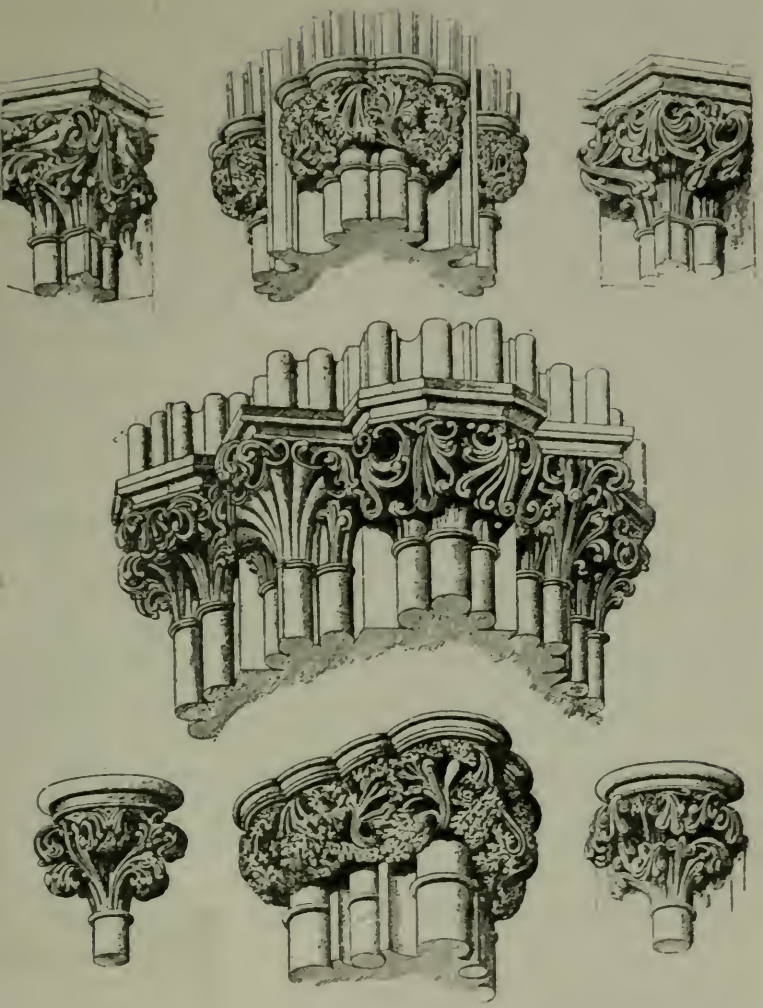
The first impression given by the nave of Wells is probably one of considerable coldness, owing to the whitish colour of the cleaned masonry and the finely-cut, almost new, appearance of much of the carving. After a time the feeling of unredeemed coldness begins to wear off and that of beauty to gain ground, though there is never absent a certain sense of severity which is not altogether relieved by the delicious sculpture of the capitals and the rich details of the chantries at the eastern end.

There are nine bays to the crossing of the transept, supported by massive grouped piers, which in all probability, as at Exeter, are of the same diameter as the Romanesque drum-columns which they superseded. The capitals are extremely beautiful and varied; those towards the east, which are the earlier, tending to show boldness and originality, while those in the western bays are scarcely less interesting in design, but also display a delicacy of treatment which is quite Byzantine. From these imposing-looking piers spring ribbed arches of very chaste contour, which always give the impression of something Romanesque—as if they were semicircular arches sharpened to a point.

Above the arcade is the triforium, extending unbroken from end to end of the nave. At the angles formed by the meeting of the arches are sculptured heads and above them medallions. At the angle formed by the junction of every third arch with its neighbour is a corbel, from which spring the triple ribs of the vaulting, and above the triforium is the tall clerestory. The windows are filled with Perpendicular tracery, but they are themselves quite un-Perpendicular; or, indeed, anything except that strange "pointed Romanesque" which I can remember seeing only at Wells.

The Roof Vault is graceful, though not remarkably so, and its simplicity has not been enhanced by the paltry-looking stencilling which an ill-advised restoration has planted upon it. It is a restoration of the original design which was found when the XVIIIth-century whitewash was removed—but somehow it seems inappropriate: certainly there is something lacking. And if it really be part of the ancient decoration—which I question—it merely shows that there could be lack of pure taste in the Middle Ages.

The groups of capitals should be carefully studied for their variety and originality. One of the most notable is close by the north porch: there are on it an animal licking his fur and birds preening their feathers, besides a spirited figure of a ram and a human-headed bird carrying a staff. The second beyond this has a delightful representation of a fox, which has stolen a goose, chased by an irate man with a club; a merman holding a fish; birds preening themselves; and a



CAPITALS AND CAPITAL-GROUPS OF WELLS CATHEDRAL
(From Britton's volume on the Cathedral.)

long-billed bird with a frog in its mouth. Such subjects were clearly taken from the life of the fenny and agricultural country round Wells. Another capital shows a pedlar bending under his pack with a rosary in his hand—clearly a little sermon in stone.

On the south side, one of the finest capital-groups is the seventh, which is decorated with human-headed birds, one wearing a mitre. Next to it is a group ornamented with a quaint variety of subjects—a man armed with a club caught by a lion: a bird with a peculiar tail; a man carrying an axe or some similar implement; and an owl—a very solemn owl indeed.

Above the sixth bay, on the south side, is a minstrels' gallery; it is interesting to note this feature, but it hardly merits detailed description.

The nave has the appearance of a homogeneous whole, and to a great extent this is the case, for the original design was plainly followed with scrupulous care in all its essential features. But on examination it will be at once observed that the building really consists of two sections, one—that to the eastward—constructed as it stands by Bishop Reginald de Bohun, while the five western bays are the work of Jocelin. The point of junction is between the fifth and sixth bays counting from the west end, and the differences are obvious and striking. In the first place, the masonry of the earlier portion is by no means so fine as that of Jocelin. Secondly, in Reginald's work there are sculptured heads at the angles formed by the meeting of the arches—which is not the case with the newer bays. The later capitals are far more delicate in their

decoration than the earlier ones. Finally, the medallions between the triforium arches are, in Reginald's portion, sunk in the masonry and very deeply and boldly sculptured. In Jocelin's westward section they are more lightly executed, and also are on a level with the general surface of the stonework. In all essentials, however, the original design has clearly been followed from end to end.

The Aisles have precisely the same characteristics as the nave, and the work shows that they were constructed in two sections contemporaneously with it.

The Stained Glass in the windows is for the most part modern: there are only a few fragments of the ancient glazing. The western triple window contains glass of the xvith and xviith centuries, procured by Bishop Creyghton: his zeal in restoring the window is commemorated by his arms in the southern light. With this is, however, mingled some early xixth-century glass which does not harmonise well with it.

The west end of the nave, beneath the triple window, is decorated with an arcade of five arches, the central one wider than the others in order to enclose the twin arches of the doorway. The triforium is carried across this west end by an open gallery with a Perpendicular balustrade; and in the thickness of the wall is another gallery, reached by steps from the triforium. It is lighted by central openings in the quatrefeuilles of the West Front, and it would seem that this opening must have been part of the original design; otherwise the gallery would have been dark. Its purpose has puzzled many observers: I should guess that it had

THE NAVE OF WELLS CATHEDRAL FROM THE SOUTH AISLE
The Early English clustered columns have capitals enriched with exquisite leaf forms.

some connection with arrangements for examining, cleaning, and painting the mass of statuary on the screen.

The nave has four TRANSEPTS. The two westernmost ones consist of the ground floors of the twin towers. They are shut off from the aisles by doors. Both are of great interest, being built in a very pure and graceful Early English style, quite different from the peculiar architecture of the greater part of the cathedral. They have groined vaulted roofs, with circular openings which afford access to the floor above. The vault springs from graceful blue lias shafts, with capitals as fine as anything in the building. In addition the southern tower-transept has a special decoration in the form of a blind arcade between the doorway and the vault. The southern tower-transept was the porch leading to the cloisters: it is now used by the campanologists. The northern one was once the Chapel of the Holy Cross; at present it serves as a vestry.

THE CHANTRIES OF THE NAVE. In the ninth bay there face each other across the nave two Perpendicular chantries. That on the north was built by Bishop Bubwith, and was dedicated to the Holy Saviour. In ground-plan it is an elongated hexagon. Its screen is light and graceful Perpendicular work of the period, but the canopy over the altar is rather coarse and poor, and the chapel has been much defaced in its interior. To insert it between the great piers the triple shafting of one of them was chiselled away, and a corbel fixed to hide the cut, sculptured with the arms of the bishop.

Opposite to it is the chantry originally dedicated to St. Edmund of Canterbury—Archbishop Edmund Rich, one of the purest and finest figures of the Middle Ages. It was constructed by Hugh Sugar, Treasurer of Wells, one of the executors whom Bishop Beckington appointed to complete the works which he had planned. It has the same plan as its companion, but, though built sixty years later, when the Perpendicular style was in its decline, it is altogether finer and more beautiful, better proportioned and with extremely delicate screenwork. The canopy over the altar is a beautiful work of art, covering a reredos formed of five graceful canopied niches, of course bereft of their habitant images, but otherwise little defaced. On the exterior may be seen six angels, each bearing a shield. On one of these appear the initials and arms of the treasurer — three sugar-loaves surmounted by a doctor's cap. It is a pity that this lovely little chapel is used as a sort of pay-office and store-chamber.

The Pulpit. Close to Sugar's chantry and connected with it is the pulpit, a plain but not unpleasing stone structure dating from the XVIth century, and donated by Bishop Knight, whose arms appear on the front. It is not especially beautiful, but is dignified in its unpretentiousness, and certainly better to see than the "imitation Gothic" structures which are so common to-day.

The Lectern. Beside the pulpit is the lectern, a heavy brazen double desk erection, presented by Dean Creyghton, afterwards bishop, on his return from exile in 1660, together with a Bible. The Bible, bound

up with the Book of Common Prayer, still remains, but it ends with the Book of Job.

Bishops' Monuments in the Nave. On the south side of Bubwith's chantry is the long slab which covers the grave of Bishop de Haselshaw (died 1308); and to the west of Sugar's shrine that of Ralph Erghum (died 1401). On a slab near the entrance to the choir there is the matrix for the brass of a lady which, by the style of the head-dress, dates to about 1460–65. It seems probable that it marks the original site of the grave of Lady Lisle, of which more hereafter.

The Main Transepts. The transepts are usually considered to have been built some years before the nave, chiefly owing to the fact that there is less ornament—there are, for example, none of the medallions which appear in the triforium of the nave. Yet in certain respects they actually appear to be later. The corbels from which the vaulting shafts spring are sculptured in a style which is more ornamental, and therefore probably executed subsequently to those in the nave.

The triforium, also, is different: it is divided into bays, as is usual, instead of being one continuous arcade. Each bay consists of two severely plain arches, and is separated from its fellow by the vaulting shaft, which in the transepts springs from the upper edge of the main arcade. On the whole this portion of the cathedral is puzzling: the most probable explanation of the difference between the work is that the transepts were erected early, but left unfinished as regards the carving of capitals and corbels. Also it is likely

that the earthquake of 1248 had done damage which necessitated much restoration. In any case the "toothache" capitals, presently to be mentioned, must date to a time after the death of Bishop Button II. in 1274.

It is for its capitals that Wells Cathedral is especially noted, and those of the transepts are probably the most interesting of the whole series. In the northern transept are to be noted the following:

1. (*a*) A prophet, or some biblical figure, with a scroll—perhaps Moses with the Law: (*b*) A man carrying a goose: (*c*) A head with the tongue on the teeth —a characteristic action in violent toothache.

2. Moses with the Two Tables of the Law and Aaron writing his name on a scroll.

3. (*a*) Woman with bandaged face: (*b*) Nude figure seated with mouth twisted in the agonies of toothache.

In the south transept the capitals are perhaps even finer: certainly still more naïve in conception. The best group of all is probably that of the second pier from the south end. The first shows two men stealing fruit: one is plucking it, at the same time holding a dagger ready against interference by the lawful possessors, while his accomplice receives the plunder in a basket. In the second, retribution overtakes the thieves: the owners of the fruit, one armed with a pitchfork, the other with a spade, have come upon them. The first robber is already in the clutches of the rustic with the pitchfork, while the other has been overtaken by the second owner, who fetches him a vigorous "biff" on the side of the head with his spade. The expression of the two faces is delicious—the

determination on that of the angry owner as he overtakes the thief and "lands him one"; the anguish on that of the thief as he goes down beneath the emphatic blow.

The next group comprises: (1) Woman picking thorn out of her foot: (2) A man in a pointed cap with one eye closed, his finger in his mouth, evidently testing a loose or aching tooth: (3) Monkey's head: (4) A cobbler at work: (5) A female head with flowing locks: it may be that she also is conceived as suffering with toothache, and has muffled her face in her hair, as I have seen children do when the slightly less primitive remedy of a scorched handkerchief is not forthcoming.

A Capital in the South Transept of Wells Cathedral

Showing a man suffering from tocthache.

The last notable group shows: (1) A hairless face: (2) The prophet Elijah ("Elias P.") in the agonies of toothache, with hand pressed to his cheek: (3) Hooded head with one prominent tooth on which the tongue is pressed.

All these quaint capitals are on the western side of the transepts; those on the east are mostly floriated

—beautiful enough, but lacking the quaintness and interest of their fellows across the way.

THE CHAPELS OF THE TRANSEPTS. Each transept contains two chapels on the eastern side. Those of the north transept are now entered from the north aisle of the choir. The first, nearer to the choir aisle, is considered originally to have been dedicated to St. David. One of the capitals of the transept pier at this point may be noted, for it is probably intended to represent David the king in youth—a handsome smiling face with curly hair. The shaft has been chiselled away to receive the screenwork of the chapel; the corbel at the cut is another fine piece of mediæval sculpture, representing a newt feeding upon a leaved plant with berries. In this chapel is the tomb of Bishop John Still (1593–1607), a very fair example of Tudor-Jacobean art. The bishop's effigy has a red fur-lined gown over his pontifical attire; he wears an elaborate ruff, and his head is covered with the close black cap of the age.

Next to St. David's Chapel is that of the Holy Cross, in which are the tombs of two bishops. The first is the unsightly and pompous monument of the unfortunate Bishop Kidder, the successor of Ken, whom ill-luck certainly dogged all through his episcopate to the day of his tragic death. It is only noteworthy as the outcome of the filial piety and sorrow of Kidder's daughter, who is represented as gazing sadly upon the funeral urns of her parents, killed side by side by the ruin wrought in their palace by the "Great Storm" of 1703.

On the north side is the monument of Thomas

THE CHAPTER-HOUSE OF WELLS CATHEDRAL
The doorway at the head of the staircase appears beyond the clustered pier supporting the vaulted roof.

Cornish, suffragan-bishop under Bishop Fox of Bath and Wells and Bishop Oldham of Exeter. His actual title was that of Bishop of Tenos, the island in the Hellenic Cyclades. Beneath the canopy is a relief showing Christ issuing from the sepulchre, and Dr. Dearmer, in his *Guide to Wells Cathedral*, is of opinion that this tomb was used as the "Easter Sepulchre" where the Blessed Sacrament was laid during the last days of Holy Week.

In the south-east corner of the south transept is the Chapel of St. Martin. It contains the tomb of Chancellor William Biconyll (1454), a name which signifies Beacon Hill, and is now spelt Bicknell. There are, by the way, forty-seven spellings of this word, which seems astonishing until one knows that such a simple name as the writer's has some thirteen or fourteen extant variations! Biconyll's effigy rests on the table tomb, attired in full canonicals—cassock, surplice and choral cope. The chapel was once used as a vestry: it is now arranged and fitted as a war memorial shrine.

Next to St. Martin's Chapel on the north side is that of St. Calixtus. Its north side and the doors of both chapels are made from the beautiful ironwork which formerly enclosed Bishop Beckington's tomb in the choir. Worse still, the canopied reredos which formed part of the bishop's chantry shrine has also been reft away and placed in this chapel. It is a really delicious piece of Late Perpendicular art, perhaps too delicate and over-refined in execution, but marvellously minute and elaborate. The piscina is, absolutely and

without exaggeration, a pretty little toy, with a tiny fan-traceried vault.

On the south side of the chapel is the beautiful alabaster tomb of Dean Husse (died 1305), which shows Decorated sculpture at its best. The effigy is excellently sculptured and of fine proportions, but it is much less interesting than the panels. Some of them simply contain shields. One presents the Deity holding the crucifix and is peculiar rather than beautiful. The face and hands are exaggeratedly elongated; the head has a mass of curly hair and a huge crown. The elongated face is reminiscent of the queer representation on coins of the Byzantine Emperor, artist and compiler, Constantinos VII. or VIII. "Porphyrogennetos" (913–58).

Three of the panels depict contemporary clergymen in their vestments; these figures are most beautiful and admirable; the single slight defect is that the heads are a little too large: the poses are excellent and dignified, and the folds of the drapery almost Hellenic in their severe grace; the expression of the faces is calm and austere, yet gentle. All three are so delightful that it is difficult to leave them, even though the purpose be to study the finest panel of all.

This last panel has as its subject the Annunciation. Out of the heavens comes the Archangel Gabriel bearing a long scroll: he is preceded by a dove with long rays behind it, apparently intended to signify heavenly glory: and descends upon the Virgin, who has been kneeling upon a cushion at a praying-desk. Behind her is a curiously-shaped flower-pot with one

handle, in which a stiffly conventional plant is growing. At the sight of the heavenly messenger she sways round, lifting her head and holding up her hands in astonishment.

This description may sound extremely matter-of-fact, and is indeed intended to be so, for it is necessary. As a whole the panel is no more than average. The accessories are stiff and conventional; the dove might be one of those wide-winged birds which in our childhood's days we were wont to cut out of coloured paper; the archangel looks very much as though he has been thrust forth from a hole in the wall on a board. But all this is forgotten in gazing upon the semblance of the Virgin, which is neither more nor less than lovely. Crown and nimbus are of course exaggerated; but the face is that of an innocent girl: the whole pose—the astonished turn of the pretty head, the sway of the body from the hips, the outthrown hands—is perfectly natural and delightful: the folds of the drapery are admirably presented. It is difficult to imagine anything more pleasing than this beautiful little figure, with its almost unique combination of artistic feeling and childlike faith.

The Clock. In the north transept is the famous clock, formerly belonging to Glastonbury Abbey, constructed for Abbot Adam de Sudbury. The original works have been replaced by modern ones, and are now in the Mechanical Museum at South Kensington. They furnish a most instructive example of the care and perseverance of their builder, Peter Lightfoot, a monk of Glastonbury, being wholly of hand-wrought

iron: all the parts had to be forged and worked until they fitted and operated without check, which they did for more than five centuries—an amazing testimony to the skill of this ancient horologist.

The dial is enclosed in a square frame, and is about six feet in diameter. The corner spaces are occupied by four angels, each bearing the head of a man. The dial has three concentric circles. The outer one is painted blue and powdered with golden stars; and equidistant along the margin are circular tablets numbered from one to twenty-four. On the second circle are inscribed the minutes. The innermost circle contains thirty divisions for the days of the month, and two small circles side by side. One indicates the phases of the moon: the second contains a female figure and the motto *Semper peragat Phœbe.*

The dial in its frame is surmounted by an arched pediment, which overshadows a little octagonal gallery with a turret in the centre. Around this turret, when the clock strikes, revolve four equestrian figures, two moving past the other two like competitors in a tournament. One of the four is overthrown at each revolution —always the same figure; the poor fellow has barely time to reassume his erect posture when he is knocked flat upon his charger's back again. The figures seem to be much later than the date of the clock, possibly they replace statuettes of knights in armour.

Above the clock are three standing figures dating, by the dress, from the reign of Henry VIII.: probably, therefore, added when the timepiece was removed from Glastonbury to Wells. Two of them are knights

THE FONT IN THE SOUTH TRANSEPT OF WELLS CATHEDRAL
In the background is the tomb of Joan, the wife of
John Talbot, Viscount Lisle.

or beefeaters armed with battleaxes, and one of these strikes the hours on a bell beside him with his weapon. The quarters are struck on two bells by the third figure, who kicks them with his heels. Naturally the clock is the "lion" of Wells to casual visitors and tourists, who may be seen collecting in throngs when it is about to strike, amused at the antics of "Jack Blandiver" as he kicks out the quarters, and the rush of the tourneyers at the sounding of the hours.

The Font. Of much greater archæological interest is the font, which stands in the south transept. It is unquestionably the most ancient relic in the cathedral, and may very well be that which stood in the early English church of King Edward the Elder and Bishop Aethelhelm. It is certainly of a highly archaic type, hexagonal in plan, with the panels ornamented with plain blind arcading like the exterior decoration of St. Laurence's Church at Bradford-on-Avon — the style of this decoration is very distinctively pre-Norman, and undoubtedly the font has all the appearance of great antiquity, but it would be unwise to state definitely that it dates from the days when the warrior son of Alfred the Great was busy repairing the havoc wrought by the Dane. The position in the south transept is unusual, and may be traditional— a circumstance which would tend to support the theory of its ancient origin. It is now furnished with a Jacobean cover, which is not particularly in keeping with it, though as a cover it might be more unsightly than it is.

The views across the transepts are charming: the

best is perhaps that from the north-east corner of the nave, looking through the inverted arches into the south transept. The beauty of the arcades is extremely apparent: the screens of the chapels and the floriated capitals give the necessary richness; and a touch of mystery is added by the southern inverted arch flung, as it were, athwart the outlook.

The south transept contains two monuments of more than common interest. The first is that of Bishop William of March ("de Marchia"), and is chiefly noteworthy on account of its art. It is a beautiful recess-and-canopy monument of three bays, similar to that of Prince Edmund "Crouchback" in the sanctuary at Westminster Abbey, and is in all respects a splendid example of early XIVth-century art. The well-sculptured and well-proportioned effigy of the bishop lies with the head resting upon a cushion supported by angels, which have happily escaped mutilation. That has not been the good fortune of the three figures at the back of the recess, all of which have had their heads battered off. There are many traces of the former rich colouring. The central boss of the recess vaulting is sculptured with five roses, which were, very oddly, coloured green! Of the three mutilated figures at the back, which represented a bishop and two angels, the latter were originally clothed in gold lined with red, and had blue wings, while the bishop was attired in all the colours of the rainbow. This is peculiarly interesting, as it helps to give some idea of the vivid blaze of rich hues found in a mediæval cathedral.

Bishop de Marchia's sepulchre is more than usually

elaborately decorated, because great efforts were made to procure his canonisation: it is curiously ornamented with carved heads, both male and female—possibly intended to represent typical figures among the company of saints into which he had been received. The adjoining wall was adorned with paintings, traces of which survive; and there is a curious narrow staircase and passage opening into the transept by a Decorated door, which indicate that preparations had been made for converting the whole transept into a pilgrimage spot, with a gorgeous shrine, watching chamber, and the other usual appurtenances. De Marchia's admirers, however, did not succeed in gaining their point, and Wells had to rest content without a canonised bishop.

Close by the tomb of Bishop de Marchia is that of Joan, Viscountess Lisle, who died in 1463. The monument itself is a Perpendicular canopied tomb of no very special artistic merit, but retaining its colour to a quite unusual extent, having been concealed by a mask of plaster until 1809. The colouring is in red, green and yellow. Its present position is not the original one; that may very probably be indicated by a slab near the entrance of the choir, which shows the matrix for a sepulchral brass of a lady of about the date 1460–65. Presumably the monument was thrust out of sight at the Reformation by Bishop Barlow, or some other disgrace to his profession.

The historical interest of the tomb is indirect, but very great, for it carries the beholder back to the long and disastrous "Hundred Years' War" between

England and France, and especially its closing stages, in which handfuls of English soldiers, led by a few stubborn captains, strove for a quarter of a century to undo the work begun by Jeanne d'Arc. Viscountess Joan was the wife of John Talbot, Viscount Lisle, the son of the famous John, first Earl of Shrewsbury, the most notable of the English leaders in the hopeless struggle. He was born at the very moment when Jeanne turned the flowing tide of English conquest. His father's fame was so great that when the Maid came to save Orleans she fancied that "Talebot" was the English commander-in-chief. That was not so, but he was in command, together with Sir John Fastolfe, of an army despatched to save the situation and rescue the English garrisons on the Loire.

Great as was Talbot's renown there was one person in France who feared him not—and that person was "Jehan la Pucelle." On June 17th, 1429, the English forces and a small French army under Arthur of Bretagne, Duc d'Alençon, La Hire, and Pothon de Xaintrailles, met near Pataye. With the French troops was Jeanne. The English heard to their dismay that she had taken Jargeau, Meung and Beaugency one after another. They accordingly retreated, and the French were timidly following, much to the disgust of "la bonne Lorrainaise," who could not realise that the French soldiery, from marshals to pages, were still more than half-demoralised and thoroughly afraid of English tactics and English archers. They were only too happy to have saved Orleans and captured three English fortresses one after another. Why tempt

fate? Jeanne had the utmost trouble to get them to follow in Talbot's track: it seems as if she lost her temper, and though she had done her utmost to suppress foul speech and introduce a new spirit into the indescribable French camp-life, she almost swore at her faint-hearted followers. "Ou nom Dé!" (O' God's name!) she snapped at them when they hesitated over their strategic plans. "There's only one thing to do! Chase the English—haven't you spurs?"

The spurs were used, and, thanks to them, the French vanguard caught up with Talbot and Fastolfe near Pataye. The English were forming into line in a hurry, Talbot, with half the army, being already in position, while Fastolfe was coming up and deploying. The appearance of the French was a surprise: the ranks were not properly formed: the archers were busy cutting and preparing pickets to protect their front according to custom: all was unready.

The French were no less surprised, and the mere sight of the terrible English in line of battle was enough to bring them to a halt. La Hire, who was leading, at once began to deploy his men-at-arms, while de Xaintrailles, who commanded the crossbowmen, hurried forward to support him—but their expert drill-sergeantry was upset by Jeanne, who vehemently insisted that the cavalry should charge the English before they could complete their formation. As Sir C. Oman says, it is useless to ask whether Jeanne were inspired by real strategic insight or simply by patriotic —and girlish—eagerness to get at the enemy. Dunois and La Hire, good military judges and sophisticated

men of the world, said quite frankly that she had the instincts of a general—her fault clearly was that in battle she was nervous and over-eager, outpacing her men and exposing herself unnecessarily. The outstanding fact, in the present case, was that the girl was right while the war-worn French captains were wrong. They recognised it, and Jeanne had her way.

The English army was not half-formed, and the chevaux-de-frise of the archers was quite incomplete when, to their utter amazement, the Englishmen saw the heavy French cavalry on the move, advancing at a pace which accelerated until it became a fierce gallop, Jeanne leading the charge with her customary reckless bravery. Some of the archers opened fire in haste, but the French came storming on at such speed that scarce a single good volley had been delivered before Jeanne's white banner was among the staggering men and the confusedly-planted stakes. There seems to be no doubt that one of the panics, so rare in the history of England's wars, overtook the troops: they were scared by reports of Jeanne's supernatural power; caught at a disadvantage; dazed by the fanatical fury of the charging Frenchmen. For the first time in fifteen years they met enthusiasm and science combined: and before the unaccustomed impact they broke up. Talbot was captured and nearly half his small army were either slaughtered or taken prisoners. He remained a captive in France for three years; and would have been a pledge for the life of Jeanne, had not the murder of that most solitary and pathetic of heroines been resolved upon by the petty and low-

THE GREAT ENGINEERING FEAT OF THE XIVTH CENTURY IN WELLS CATHEDRAL

A near view of the inverted arches built beneath the central tower when, as the superstructure increased in weight, great cracks appeared.

minded French magnates no less than by the infuriated and bigoted English princes and barons.

It was about the time of this disastrous defeat that John Lord Lisle was born: cradled, as it were, in a national disaster, he grew up amid others until in 1452, a young man of twenty-three, he went to Bordeaux to join his aged father, who was struggling to keep a last remnant of dominion for England in Guienne, which had been faithful for three hundred years and more to her Plantagenet lords. Father and son together had not five thousand English soldiers under their banner, when, in 1453, three French armies came down to conquer the last remains of the heritage of Eleanor of Aquitaine, brought by her to her husband, Henry II. In July the principal force laid siege to Castillon on the Dordogne, and on the seventeenth the two Talbots appeared to relieve it with about five thousand men, partly English, partly Gascons. The French were at least twice as numerous, perhaps even stronger; they were stationed in a heavily fortified camp, with a detachment in the Abbey of St. Florent, and a force of Bretons covering the siege on the north-east. The main camp was defended by anything from one hundred to three hundred guns of one sort and another. So says Æneas Sylvius Piccolomini, afterwards Pope Pius II., who had means of knowing. Most of them were probably simply heavy hand-pieces, but there were big siege cannon also, and in any case the little Anglo-Gascon force had not a single gun.

Shrewsbury began by storming the abbey, and the

remains of its garrison fled to the principal camp. The old English leader could now see the nature of his task. He made up his mind that the only chance was to go straight at a selected point of the cannon-bristling ramparts, and carry the great camp with an impetuous charge. Forming his whole army into a solid column, with the men-at-arms in front, he marched steadily on. The French artillery, hand-guns and crossbows opened fiercely upon the approaching mass, but it came on none the less, crossed the ditch, and planted the "talbot stronge" of its leaders on the rampart. For a desperate hour the men of England and men of Gascony struggled to hold their ground. More and more guns were dragged up; more and more troops were thrown upon the stubborn column; shot and bullets and crossbow bolts made havoc in its close ranks, and at last the Breton contingent, summoned from its covering position, came in on the English flank. The French main body swarmed out of the entrenchments, and all was over. Shrewsbury's leg was shattered by a cannon ball, and Lisle, defending his father's body, was struck dead beside him. Some relics of the little army escaped into Castillon; a few more fled away to Bordeaux and St. Emilion; all the rest were slain or taken; and England's last hope of holding Guienne was gone. Lord Lisle was born while his father was being beaten by Jeanne d'Arc at Pataye: he fell helping his father to make a last stand against the new French spirit which Jeanne had created. So his widow's modest tomb in the transept of Wells has much more than the slight interest attaching to it as

that of the widow of a Talbot. It leads back the thoughts of the observer directly to the time of the Hundred Years' War, and more especially to those days when England, by sheer terror, almost succeeded in dominating and holding France, until the terror was met and countered by a new spirit, instilled into her desponding countrymen by a single untaught, unaided, peasant girl. The once brilliantly coloured monument bears the name and likeness of Joan Talbot, but it recalls far more strongly the name and deeds of another Joan, to whom the Church which martyred her has at last done tardy justice by the conferring of the title of Saint, which she won in life.

The Inverted Arches. Always, in moving about the nave and transepts, the view is intercepted and dominated by those curious and fascinating inverted arches, which are perhaps the most impressive feature of the interior. Their purpose and erection have already been mentioned; they are simply and purely engineering devices, without disguise or concealment. Indeed, that which will most impress the observer is their absolute frankness. They seem to proclaim to him: "Here we are! We may not be very beautiful: maybe our appearance disturbs you; but here we stand, and if you remove us this Cathedral of St. Andrew will crash down upon your head!" The odd thing is that after the first shock they cease to annoy, and tend to become part of the atmosphere of the place. It is impossible to survey them closely without discovering that they are so ingeniously worked into the earlier structure of the church that they appear to be part of it.

There are three pairs of these mediæval devices, one across the east end of the nave, the other two at the inner ends of the transepts. The first is that which is first seen by the visitor, and there is no question that its appearance is somewhat bizarre and that—still at the preliminary glance—it seems to block the view into the choir. The fact is that it does nothing of the kind; it is the ugly organ case which renders that ill office: if that were removed the contrivance would, as far as I can see, add to the picturesqueness of the vista. The view across the transepts is actually enormously enhanced by the presence of the flanking pairs. Take your stand near the north-eastern corner of the north transept, look across to the south-western corner of the southern one, and judge. The writer obtained that sort of impression which might have been produced by some fantastic palace erected by Djinns of the fabulists of the Thousand-and-One Nights. Surely there is nothing quite comparable to this view in all the churches of England—perhaps of the world.

There is much, also, which pleases in the devices themselves. The great arches springing from the pavement have a certain mysterious quality about them as if they had been summoned to rise out of the earth by some enchanter: the mouldings are bold and stern, almost defiant. The single feature to which I object is the circular openings, which have rather a staring appearance: had they been quatrefeuilles all would have been well.

Above the inverted arch which faces the nave a

great crucifix has been placed, with statues representing the Virgin and St. John on either side. This is in accordance with the Anglo-Catholic enthusiasm for mediævalism in ritual.

The interior of the tower is concealed by the interposition of a Perpendicular fan-traceried vault of little merit. It was, perhaps, added with the design further to stabilise the tower: but the conception was unfortunate. The work completely hides the beautiful interior of the tower, with its fine arcades, and one misses the sense of soaring majesty and mysterious distance which is so strongly apparent when gazing up an unobstructed tower—for example, that of Ely.

The Choir Screen or Pulpitum. The screen—or pulpitum, to give it its correct designation—which separates the choir from the nave, was built early in the XIVth century, probably by Bishop Ralph of Shrewsbury, or perhaps by the famous building dean, de Godelee. It therefore roughly synchronises with the lovely pulpitum at Exeter, but can never have been its equal: indeed, its design is one of rather stiff conventionalism: to the writer it is much too lofty. Its appearance also has not been improved by the pushing out of its central portion in order to support the enlarged organ—one of the ill-advised "restorations" of which there are too many at Wells.

The Organ which, according to custom, crowns the pulpitum, is an excellent instrument, but it is a sad eyesore. The ancient organ presumably disappeared during the Puritan revolution, and in 1664 Dean Creyghton, a musician himself, provided a new one.

A hundred and twenty-two years later it was rebuilt, and in the last century Willis once more remodelled and enlarged it, so that to-day only one of the original stops remains. It comprises a great organ, a swell organ, a choir organ, and a pedal organ, and has forty stops. There are four pneumatic pistons, six couplers, and seven composition pedals. The wind is introduced by hydraulic power.

The Choir. The choir consists of two distinct and sharply contrasted sections. They are not especially in harmony one with another, and, with all respect to the good Bishop Ralph of Shrewsbury and his deans, it must be regretted that there was among them no Walter de Stapeldon, who would have seen to it that the new work would be so beautifully united with the old that only a keen observer would notice the junction.

The three westward bays have the same general characteristics as those of the nave, but the sternly beautiful Early English arcades are crowned by rather florid tabernacling in the Late Decorated style, and the clerestory has also been remodelled. The effect is not unpleasing, because the rich capitals of the Early English piers help to harmonise the differing styles, but the eastward bays are much less satisfactory. The arcades have not the manly force of those of Reginald, and the tabernacle work of the pseudo-triforium comes right down upon the haunches of the arches—which is altogether unpleasant and jars utterly with the totally different arrangement of the western bays. The extraordinary breakage in the continuity is worse than unpleasant—it hurts.

The east end, though still showing what, I fear, I must call the weakness of the later bays, is better than they are, on account of the extreme delicacy and grace of the triple arcade which forms its lower stage. It is frankly delightful and fascinating—also quite feminine. To the arcades of the nave, which look as if they can and will stand for all time, it is what Aphrodite Anadyomene is to Athene of the Parthenon—a seductive girl as against a strong, stately, virgin goddess, as beautiful as vigorous. The one simply attracts the lower senses: while the other appeals to the intellect. Withal it must be admitted that this lovely arcade may well be called the Three Graces—grace is in its every line. And then the eye is taken, and the intellect distressed, by the spindly tabernacle work with its feeble shafts running down to nothing—to the haunches of those three examples of frail beauty. And above them the great window is placed, looking as though it were perched upon stilts.

The roof completes the impression that the choir of Wells is no more than an ambitious failure. It is a lierne vault with curiously heavy angular ribs, and looks too ponderous for the slender piers from which it springs, besides failing to harmonise with the tabernacle work below. Professor Freeman calls it "a coved roof, such as we are used to in woodwork in this part of England." That expresses very well the feelings of the writer. Executed in wood it would be admirable, in stone it seems crushingly heavy.

These are of course the impressions of one man, and must not be regarded as anything else. There is much

which is beautiful in the choir of Wells; a great deal of the detail is elegant in the extreme. The triple arcade of the east end is lovely; but all these things put together do not make a really beautiful whole, and the best experts seem to be possessed of a feeling that in some fashion the choir of Wells falls short of anything more than a moderate standard of architectural success. Men excellent in their way watched over its remodelling and its building—but there was not among them a Reginald de Bohun or a Walter de Stapeldon, and their failure to produce such an architectural triumph as the nave of Wells or the choir of Exeter seems only too evident. If they had only been content to follow the superb model left them by Reginald—but enough!

Let us turn from the not quite beautiful whole to the beautiful details. The first to attract the eye will probably be the superb "Jesse" window at the east end. In style it is just on the border-line between Decorated and Perpendicular. There seems little fault to be found with it. Its outline is opulent as well as graceful: the carrying up to the arch of the two principal mullions gives it precisely that appearance of strength which the flowing lines of Decorated tracery sometimes lack. Yet even here one notes the evidence of a certain deficiency of artistic taste. The tracery of the side lights is designed so that it does not fit the outline of the window, with the result that on both sides there is an appearance of shrinkage.

A "Jesse" window, it may be added for the in-

formation of those not acquainted with the subject, has as its theme the descent of Christ from Jesse of Bethlehem. Naturally the mediæval artists introduced such elaborations and variations as might please them, but the pedigree is always the central idea. In the lowest tier at Wells are Jesse and his forbears, of whom Obed and Aminadab are designated by name. In the second line appear David, with his harp; Solomon, with the model of the temple of Jerusalem, and Jeconiah, the "prince of the captivity": also three prophets. All these figures are very fine, and the rich hues of their robes are admirable.

In the centre of the window is the Nativity—a quite beautiful and delightful group, the Child sitting in a pretty, natural attitude upon the Mother's knees. Above it is the Crucifixion, naturally different in treatment and sadder in conception, but still distinctly beautiful, without any of the gross materialism which often disfigures the presentation of the subject. The figure of the Virgin shows, not intense and emotional human grief, but calm and hopeful resignation. On the whole the Jesse window of Wells is a really splendid work of mediæval art.

Four of the clerestory windows retain some of their ancient glazing, representing various saints of the Church. One of them must date from the latter part of the XIIIth century, judging by the style of the armour; it may have been erected by Robert of Burnell or William of March. In the adjoining window are St. Gregory in his papal tiara (this is an anachronism) and St. Egidius with wide ears. There are some

modern windows also, but they hardly deserve special notice; in one at least the stained glass is raw and staring.

There is no reredos: the altar stands beneath the central opening of the eastern arcade: the wing arches are practically open except for a stone wall carried across their lower portions, so that there is a clear view into the retro-choir and the Lady Chapel. This arrangement has been criticised vigorously on religious grounds, and not without reason, for the object of the east end of a cathedral choir is assuredly not the provision of a beautiful peep for the benefit of visitors. However, public opinion at Wells has been strongly in favour of retaining the open arches, and the offer of a reredos was refused by Dean Plumptre for that reason and no other. Perhaps, however, he was instinct with the wisdom of the serpent, and simply advanced the plea in order to be able gracefully to refuse some tasteless modern structure—in which case posterity may be grateful to him.

The Bishop's Throne is a Perpendicular structure, sometimes assigned to Bishop Beckington, but much more probably erected by Ralph of Shrewsbury or Dean Godelee, as it seems to have something in common with the tabernacle work behind it. Unfortunately it has been much restored, and therefore is little more than a shadow of its former self. The pulpit and the stalls date from the ill-conducted restoration of 1848–50, and the less which is said about them from the artistic standpoint the better. The utmost which can be advanced in their praise is that

their art is a faithfully mechanical copy of Gothic —which means that it is frigidly lifeless.

The Misereres. The seats which, as Freeman savagely declared, are "rammed, jammed and crammed" into the choir have little to recommend them, but one atrocity the "restorers" of 1850 did contrive not to perpetrate — they spared the sixty-four miserere carvings: and sixty of them may be seen beneath the seats, while four are preserved in the library. They are as fine examples of mediæval wood-carving as exist in England. To give a complete list would occupy too much space, especially as it is necessary to obtain special permission to view them as a whole. But among the best of them may be noted:

On the south side: Two dragons biting each other's tail: a gryphon fighting an animal, apparently a lion or leopard: a mermaid suckling a lion: a puppy biting a cat: a cat playing a fiddle: a man killing a monster: a fox preaching to four geese, one of which is dozing: a peacock in pride.

On the north side: A sleeping dragon: a man squatting on the ground, apparently winking: a fox running off with a goose: two human-headed monsters embracing: a hawk scratching its head: a woman with an expression of agony and tangled hair apparently crawling away from a pursuer—one hand on her shoulder, the other extended as if groping the way: a monkey with a squirrel on a leash—the latter is apparently endeavouring to break away: a man riding on a lion, which he urges on with a whip: a two-legged creature with a tail of

three oak leaves on a stem—the unfortunate monster seems to be trying to puzzle out the reason of their being there: an eagle with extended wings.

On both sides there are several human figures of both sexes, some grotesque or contorted, others normal; the only one which furnishes a clue is that of a female head on the north side; she wears her hair in a caul on both sides, covered with a veil and a fillet. The style of headdress appears to date this particular figure to the early XVth century. So many of the carvings seem to be unfinished that a comparatively late date is perhaps indicated.

The Tomb of Jocelin. In the centre of the choir is the stone which marks the tomb of the artist-bishop who gave to the cathedral its west front. The sepulchre must once have been worthy of him, but when Bishop Godwin wrote in the last quarter of the XVIth century he described it as "monstrously defaced," and presently all trace of the tomb disappeared, though its site was traditionally known. In 1874 search on the spot brought to view a broken stone coffin containing a skeleton, which had apparently been violated. The covering stone was replaced by a new one on which were incised the words: "Jocelinus de Welles, Ep. 1242."

The Choir Aisles. The aisles of the choir have the same general characteristics as the choir itself, but are more pleasing, the similar lierne vault not appearing to press so heavily upon the piers and walls. These aisles are entered from the transepts by ogee-arched screens inserted in the Early English arch nearest to the choir. There is much fine XIVth-century stained

glass in the upper portions of the windows of the south aisle: one of them has its lower portion glazed with glass bearing date 1607, showing armorial shields and small square pictures.

In the north aisle the easternmost window still contains a mediæval St. Michael; its companion a crucifix and a St. Mary Magdalene, with some XVIth-century armorial glass: the third window is similar. The fourth is modern: it was erected to the memory of Dean Plumptre, already mentioned, who died in 1891. It depicts the virtues and labours of Bishop Ken, and is on the whole a pleasing composition, but the symbolism is perhaps somewhat laboured.

Early Effigies. In the aisles and the chapels are many early effigies of bishops, bearing the names of Aethelwyn, Leofric, Duduc, Burwold and Gisa. Not all of these were bishops of Bath and Wells—Leofric was perhaps a dean: Burwold was an early Abbot of Glastonbury. But they unquestionably covered the well-authenticated remains of ecclesiastics: when they were moved in 1848, boxes were found beneath them containing human bones and leaden name-tablets. It is probable that the remains were collected, and the effigies made, by Reginald de Bohun or Jocelin de Welles when they were building the cathedral, but whether they correctly identified them is another matter. They may also have been disturbed in later times. Be that as it may, it is impossible to survey them without a feeling of reverential interest.

Of these effigies, three, unidentified, are in the north choir aisle, near the entrance to the north transept:

one named Gisa is at the east end of the same aisle. Three are in the western portion of the south choir aisle: four more are arranged in pairs on each side of the retro-choir. This arrangement of them was made in 1848. They are a peculiar and distinctive feature of interest: they are therefore dealt with in a mass instead of separately as they are encountered by the visitor.

Monuments in the South Choir Aisle

In the second bay is the tomb of Bishop William Button II. (1267–74), with the figure of the saintly prelate upon its Purbeck marble slab, bearded and in full pontificals, with hand raised in the act of benediction: it is claimed to be the earliest incised slab in England, but this is surely questionable, though it is certainly among the most ancient. In the restoration of 1848 the coffin was opened in the presence of Dean Jenkyns, and found to contain the undisturbed skeleton of an old man with an absolutely perfect set of beautiful teeth, quite undecayed and barely discoloured. With the bones were an iron ring, the fragments of a pastoral staff, and a leaden tablet inscribed with beautiful Lombardic lettering:

> Hic jacet Willelmus de Button secundus Bathoniensis et Wellensis episcopus sepultus XII. die Decembris anno domini MCCLXXIIII.
>
> Here lies William II. of Button, Bishop of Bath and Wells, buried on the 12th day of December in the year of the Lord 1274.

The quaint fact that the beauty and perfection of the bishop's teeth led to his being regarded as the special helper of sufferers from toothache has already been noted. Godwin says that in the late XVIth century persons afflicted with that complaint still visited the monument in hope of relief.

Next in the line is the modern alabaster tomb of Bishop Lord Arthur Hervey (died 1894). There is nothing to be said of this pretentious structure, except to wish that a different class of memorial could have been devised: it looks utterly out of place in its rather blatant newness.

Beyond is the splendid tomb of Bishop Beckington, a double-staged Perpendicular erection, which was unhappily shamefully mutilated at the restoration of 1850. The lower stage is covered by a canopy, which also supports the upper one. This canopy is a very beautiful example of contemporary art; the supports are angels with outspread wings, sculptured with exquisite delicacy.

The tomb was built by Beckington in 1452, thirteen years before his death. One must pay respect to the feeling which inspired him to keep always before his eyes the day on which he would be called to his account, but it could be wished that he had been a little less morbid, and have chosen some other stimulant of memory than the figure of a mouldering corpse, half wrapped in a shroud, which lies upon the lower slab. On the upper is the representation of the munificent prelate as when he departed this life, the deeply lined, wrinkled old face testifying to Beckington's

long and crowded life: it is that of a man who could scarcely ever have been idle.

The tomb is surrounded by a wrought-iron screen of extremely chaste and beautiful workmanship, part of which was cut out when the enclosure was reduced in size in order to enlarge the choir in 1850. It is painful to relate that the lovely miniature chantry connected with it was also hacked away and transferred elsewhere. A lifeless imitation Gothic screen now separates the tomb from the choir.

Eastward of Beckington's tomb is that of Bishop Harewell, the builder of the south-western tower. It is presumably a lifelike representation of the prelate, who is known to have been a stout and heavy man. The feet rest upon hares, in punning allusion to his name.

The tomb of John of Drokensford stands at the entrance to the Chapel of St. John the Evangelist, which opens from the south side of the aisle at the point where the aisle proper ends and the retro-choir begins. The canopy has vanished: it was taken down in 1758, being in danger of falling. The table tomb itself remains almost intact. It has one remarkable feature: the ogee heads of its panels are completely through-cut, a curious and not particularly pleasing device. The spandrels of the panel arches have two shields repeated right round: one of them shows the arms of the bishop—four swans' heads. The monument still shows many traces of its former rich colouring.

Monuments of the North Choir Aisle. In the north aisle, opposite to the tomb of John of Drokens-

ford, stands that of Dean Forrest (died 1446). It somewhat resembles that of the bishop, but is of course later in style, and is so much mutilated as to be little more than a wreck—carving and colouring defaced and canopy gone.

Farther down the aisle going westward is the sepulchre of the good Bishop Ralph of Shrewsbury, transferred hither from its rightful place in the choir, apparently at the Reformation. In the process its "grates," evidently wrought-iron screening like that of Beckington's monument, disappeared. The effigy has been shamefully treated by vandals of all the centuries: it is covered with their contemptible names. It shows the bishop in full pontificals with every detail complete.

The Chapels of the Choir Aisles. From the choir aisles open two small chapels, which form minor transepts at the eastern end of the cathedral. That of the south aisle is dedicated to St. John the Evangelist; its Decorated architecture is not improved by a staring modern stained-glass window and the pompous, tasteless tomb of Dean Jenkyns (died 1854), under whose auspices the unhappy restoration of 1848–50 was conducted. There is a grim but doubtless quite unconscious irony in the epitaph *Multum ei debet ecclesia Wellensis* (the church of Wells owes much to him). It owes him far too much—much vandalism, much unnecessary alteration, very much bad and tasteless ornamentation and refitting. Let Dean Jenkyns have the credit of good intentions—but good intentions, it is said, are the pavement of a well-

worn road, and to the Cathedral of Wells this man of excellent intentions did irretrievable harm.

Against the southern wall is the tomb of Dean Gunthorpe (died 1498), the builder of the deanery, and the donor to the cathedral of a silver image of the Virgin weighing one hundred and fifty-eight pounds. There are traces of colour on the monument: the panels are blue and contain the initials I G, together with the dean's arms, in which it is hardly necessary to say that guns figure prominently.

The chapel of the north choir aisle is dedicated to St. John the Baptist. On its eastern wall is a sculptured relief of the Ascension: the original Decorated piscina still remains. On the north side is the marble tomb, with effigy, of Bishop Creyghton, who did so much to restore the cathedral after the restoration of 1660. The effigy displays conscious antiquarianism, being vested in cope and alb and crowned with the mitre —an unusual circumstance at that epoch. Opposite to Creyghton's sepulchre is that of Bishop Gilbert Berkeley, quite unassuming, not to say plain and bare, but with two very quaint Latin inscriptions, one of which strikes rather a curious note, since in crabbed Latin it alludes to the bishop as speaking from heaven. The other epitaph is also in Latin; in itself it is not undignified, but is disfigured by that craze for puerile anagram which was so characteristic of those days. Here it is:

Vixi, videtis praemium:
Luxi, redux quieascibus.
Pro, caplua gendo praesulis
Septem per annos triplices.

The first words of the two first lines make up the following Latin numerals: VI. (6), XI. (11), LV. (55) and XI. (11). The total is 83, which was the age of the bishop at his death. This kind of ingenuity would to-day suit a Christmas gathering or the amusement pages of a magazine very well, but would appear utterly out of place in the epitaph of a public man. Translated freely the lines read:

> I have lived: you see my reward:
> I have shone: to my rest I return.
> I have held my office of bishop
> For seven times three years.

In the north-west corner is the effigy of John de Myddleton, who was for a short time Chancellor of Wells, and resigned to take full orders as a friar. He died in 1337.

The Retro-Choir. The retro-choir is one of the glories of Wells; for sheer beauty it has few equals and fewer superiors. As its name indicates, it is simply the space behind the choir, between it and the Lady Chapel. Its vaulting is carried on six slender grouped piers of Purbeck marble, two of which prolong the line of the northern and southern walls of the choir, while the other four stand at the corners of a rectangle, between the rear face of the choir and the entry of the Lady Chapel. The effect of the group of slender columns and the spreading ribs of the vault is one of extreme grace and charm; it somewhat resembles that produced by the fairy-like arches and graceful columns of the galilee chapel at Durham: but at

Durham there is not the entrancing view into the Lady Chapel, with its ancient stained glass. The conception, also, is quite satisfactory as a work of art: it is the continuation and complement of the Three Graces of the choir, and what has been said of them applies also to the retro-choir.

The ancient episcopal effigies in this part of the church have already been noticed, but one other monument requires a word of mention. On the right-hand side of the entrance to the Lady Chapel is a beautiful, if rather formal, shrine tomb, without any effigy. It has three arcades on each side, and one at the west end: the eastern end is closed by a niche. The colour of this part has been restored; it contains a shield bearing the Agnus Dei, and is strewn with fleurs-de-lys. The table is high, so as to occasion doubt as to whether the erection were really a tomb. It has been called that of Bishop Button I., but the style is certainly much later than the period of that prelate, though it may have been erected over his remains by a successor—perhaps John of Drokensford or Ralph of Shrewsbury. The monument looks very well from the south choir aisle; the western arch with its tall crocketed pediment has an aspect of airy elegance which harmonises with the columns and vaulting of the retro-choir.

The Lady Chapel

The Lady Chapel forms a five-sided apse to the retro-choir, but as for ecclesiastical purposes its boundary

is marked on the west by two of the columns which support the roof of the latter, it actually becomes an irregular octagon with three open sides. The manner in which it was, as it were, dovetailed on to the retro-choir is peculiar and somewhat difficult to describe: the visual effect is that of three arches surmounted by three others, after the fashion of those double bridges in Switzerland and Wales to which the name of the Devil has been given. Each face has a splendid Decorated window: between them are three shafted piers, from which spring the ribs of the vault. The ribs meet in a boss sculptured with a representation of the Saviour seated, with hands raised to bless.

As an architectural whole the Lady Chapel and the vaulted work which so ingeniously connects it with the retro-choir are admirable—"original and unique," to quote Professor Willis. The details, considered attentively, are not so satisfactory: the capitals have lost the freedom and vigour of those in the nave and transepts: the five windows are mechanical copies of one another. At the same time the floriated capitals are at any rate gorgeously beautiful, and the contour and arrangement of the windows admirable. The defects will not be noticed by the non-critical observer; and both experts and non-experts will be ready to admit that the chapel forms a worthy eastern terminal to a beautiful church.

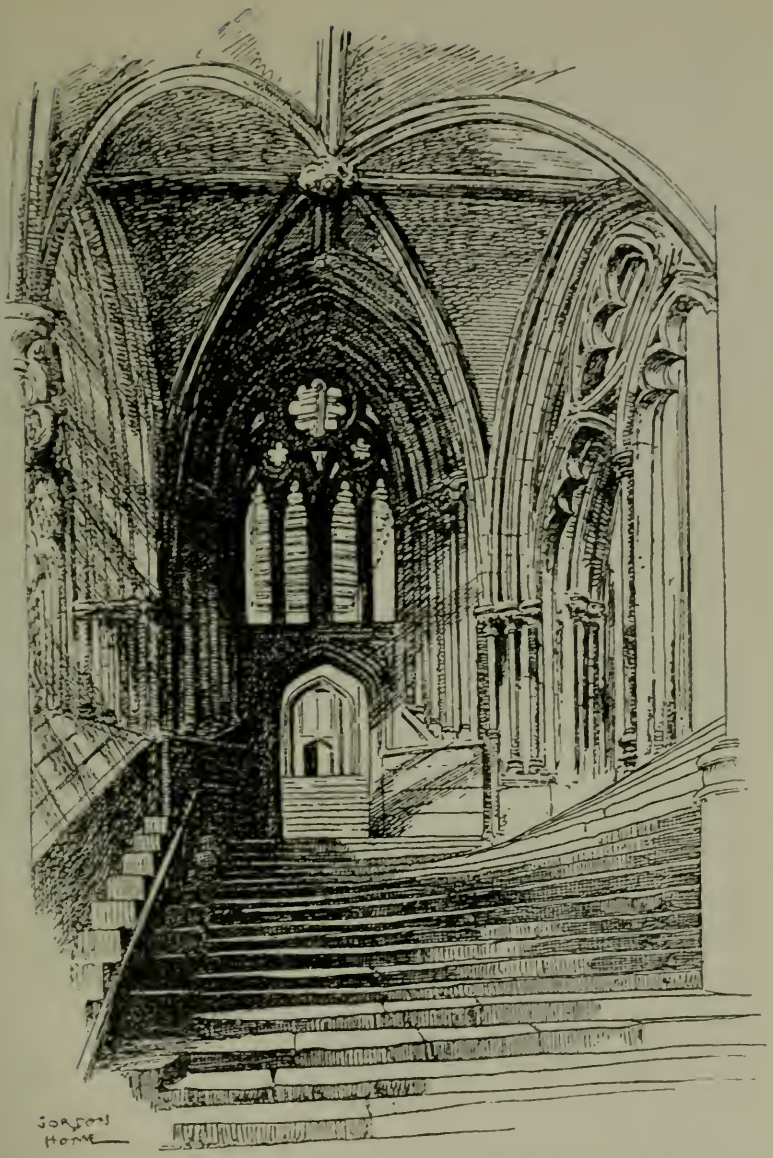
The reredos is constructed from the ruins of the ancient one, and the effect is not very satisfactory, since it was not easy to fit together the fragments. The fitments are modern, but in good taste.

The five great windows are all filled with ancient stained glass, but unhappily only with fragments collected from all quarters and packed together almost at random, as it would seem. The east window has been more carefully restored, but eked out with modern glass which does not harmonise very well with that of the mediæval artists. There are two tiers of figures in the lower lights: the upper lights contain angels bearing the emblems of the Passion of Christ, and above them are emblems of three of the Evangelists: the fourth is lost. The two flanking windows also retain intact a number of busts of patriarchs and bishops.

The Chapter-House

The chapter-house really comprises three distinct structures: the Chapter-hall itself; the Undercroft; and the Staircase, each of which demands a special description and has an individuality of its own; and each of which belongs to a distinct period of art. The undercroft, judging from its style, which is fully developed Early English, must have been completed about 1275; there are traces of subsequent work which may indicate final repairs and embellishments. The staircase, on the same evidence, belongs to the Early Decorated period; while the chapter-house itself dates to the end of that architectural epoch.

The Staircase. The chapter-house staircase is entered by the doorway in the eastern aisle of the



THE STAIRCASE TO THE CHAPTER-HOUSE OF WELLS CATHEDRAL

It is the most original of all the staircases in the English cathedrals. Probably it was finished by about 1275.

north transept. It is a very impressive if not unique architectural conception. The staircase ascends for eighteen steps; and then one part continues onward to the Chain-Gate Bridge, while the other swerves away to the door of the chapter-house. The manner in which this swerve is accomplished is most peculiar: there is no real branch, nor is there any sense of one: the impression given is that of diverging or, rather, converging streams of water. Indeed in some lights the descent from the chapter-house door into the main stairway has the appearance of a frozen cascade.

On the right hand of the staircase the wall is solid: on the left it is pierced by two splendid Early Decorated windows, their sills parallel with the rise of the treads. The columns supporting their arches are of blue lias with capitals which still display a powerful naturalistic feeling. Their tracery is boldly geometrical, and they still retain remnants of their ancient glazing. Beneath them is a stepped stone bench, each rise having a foot-place; the whole arrangement looks very curious and creates an odd sense of confusion and even of dilapidation alongside the well-trodden steps of the great diverging staircase.

The direct ascent ends in what was originally, beyond doubt, a four-light window similar to those at the side. The lower part of this is now occupied by a Perpendicular doorway: the glass is gone so that the effect is that of an open screen, through which may be discerned the narrower stairway which leads to the Chain-Gate Bridge, and the ornate, graceful timber roof of the passage itself. Right up to the door

of the bridge the stone steps have the same character, timeworn and uneven, trodden by the footsteps of twenty generations. The resemblance to a petrified cascade is more than ever apparent.

The Chapter-House. Turning away up the strange swerve to the right the visitor faces the door of the chapter-house, a wide arched entry having the opulent outline of the Decorated school. Within the main arch are twin entrances, and the space above them is filled by a triangular figure with curved sides. Arches, the triangle, and the smaller triangles formed by its contact with the inner and outer arches, are all moulded, giving a result which is both rich and delicate, if somewhat fantastic.

Internally the chapter-house is a splendid octagonal hall, fifty feet in diameter, with a central pier consisting of sixteen clustered shafts about an inner core. Each of the eight sides has a window of four lights, with beautiful Decorated tracery. They have no shafts, but the mouldings are enriched with two lines of the ball-flower ornament. The tracery is still filled with its ancient stained glass: the deep ruby tints are especially noticeable. The only unsatisfactory window is that over the doorway: it has, so to speak, no sill: its mullions run down on to the arch of the entrance door in the fashion which is apparent in the eastern end of the choir.

Between the windows, in each angle of the hall, are grouped pilasters, from which springs the many-ribbed roof vaulting. From each of them branch out eight ribs, while thirty-two diverge from the central

pier. The intersections of the ribs are sealed by many elaborately sculptured bosses.

Beneath each window is a range of seven blank Decorated arches, supported by triple pilasters and crowned by gables, with pilaster pinnacles between them. On each side of the door is another, so that there are fifty-one in all, providing seats for the bishop and the fifty official members of the chapter. The canopies are ornamented with a whole series of sculptured heads. The bishop's stall, facing the door, still retains traces of the ancient colour-scheme: the saltire of St. Andrew shows above the canopy: the small heads have quite distinctly pink cheeks, and there is colour remaining on eyes and hair.

The roof is separated from the vault by a curious chamber — curious because the vault organisation, springing from a central column, occasions a funicular dip in the centre like the vortex of a whirlpool.

The Undercroft, in many respects the most solemnly impressive building in Wells, is entered from the north choir aisle. The door has a canopy supported by two heads. This leads into a vestibule with a vaulted roof, carried on a series of quaint corbels. One of them shows a pair of monsters fighting, apparently for a head which lies between them on its cranium: another has a hand holding a capital: a third is a head in the last stage of toothache, the cheeks are swollen enormously, and a cloth is tied round them beneath the chin. This last testifies to the time of the toothache pilgrims to the shrine of William Button II., but the elaboration of these corbels may very well

have been carried out while the chapter-house was being built. The bosses of the vault are also elaborate and quaint. Beside the door leading into the undercroft itself is a stone lantern. There are two doors: the outer one is very massive and has a huge lock and two equally huge bolts. The inner door is lighter with elaborate wrought-iron hinges.

The undercroft has a central pier like the chapter-house: it is at least seven feet in diameter, and about it are grouped eight dwarf Early English columns. This arrangement would give a vault like that of the hall above, but in the midst of the ring-like passage thus formed are more squat dwarf columns, so that there are actually two concentric galleries, and the visitor gains the impression of something resembling a labyrinth, with murky passages leading hither and thither beneath the darkling vault, and heavy piers and columns showing dimly through the gloom. The vaulting itself is admirable in its construction, and remarkable for the method in which the arches are arranged without the use of ribs.

The undercroft is at present used as a kind of museum or receptacle for architectural fragments and other relics. There are many pieces of sculptured stone and several complete sarcophagi. There is also a cope chest of the usual semicircular shape, which permitted of the richly-wrought vestment to be laid away with a single fold. In the doorway is a piscina, whose sculpture is as quaint and original as anything in Wells: it represents a dog gnawing a bone.

The external appearance of the chapter-house is

thoroughly impressive. It lacks the conical roof which is found at York and elsewhere, but certainly does not lose by its omission: the Decorated parapet and the fine pinnacles form an admirable crown to the splendid windows and elaborated buttresses, and complete the impression that the whole group of buildings is not easily to be surpassed anywhere in England.

The Chain-Gate Bridge. From the top of the chapter-house staircase the narrower continuation already mentioned leads to the Chain-Gate Bridge, a covered gallery and gatehouse connecting the cathedral with the Vicars' Close. This work of Bishop Beckington, intended for purposes of pure convenience, is not grandly impressive like the cathedral, for it is built on a comparatively small scale, but it is a delightful structure, admirably adapted to its purpose, and possessing true artistic merit as well as much mild beauty. A detailed description is rather waste of time, because the prosaic statement that it comprises a three-arched gateway, with an independent opening farther to the south, set in a blank buttressed wall, and a gallery traversing both, gives not an idea of the pleasure which the structure affords to all who are not philistines.

The Cloister. The cloister at Wells covers an unusually large area, but has only three galleries instead of four. It must be remembered that it was not by any means a necessity, there being no monks at Wells; it is, in fact, simply a covered promenade, erected as a luxury for the resident canons.

The enclosure was laid out very early in the history

of the cathedral, and seems to have been walled with stone, for the lower portions of the eastern wall, at least, are considered to be of the XIIth century—that is, probably, of the episcopate of Reginald de Bohun, or even of Robert of Lewes—while the completion of the enclosure is attributed to Jocelin. Within the walls, however, there was for centuries nothing more than a wooden pentroof. It was not until about 1425 that the executors of Bishop Bubwith began the eastern gallery. The other two were built by Beckington, his executors, and the Treasurer Thomas Henry. When complete the cloister presented three galleries —south, east, and west—each of thirteen Late Perpendicular bays, with a second storey on the east and west sides. It cannot be said that Beckington or his executors displayed much artistic feeling, for they continued their gallery up to and against the south-western tower.

Architecturally there is nothing deserving of special admiration in the cloister of Wells. The style is very late and rather decadent Perpendicular, and the contour of the vault is very weak.

The garth is now a cemetery: its traditional name is the Palm Churchyard and, in point of fact, a yew still spreads its dark shadow over the centre of the enclosure. Beneath the eastern gallery runs a conduit of masonry, which supplied the necessary water for the cathedral establishments before the introduction of modern supply pipes. In the garth is a dipping place, from which the water was drawn in buckets: it was, doubtless, also used as a laundry. It was

covered in and its site forgotten, but recently it has been again brought to light: originally it was covered by a chamber with receptacles for linen washed or awaiting washing.

The Library. Over the eastern gallery of the cloister is the library, which is also a museum. The bookcases, with many book-chains still attached, project at right angles from the wall, with desks and benches between, as in other ancient libraries—such as that of Merton College, Oxford, and Hereford Cathedral. There are some three thousand volumes in the apartment, including several—one of them an Aldine Aristotle—which have notes in the hand of Erasmus. Here is fitly deposited the bulk of Bishop Ken's library, and a collection of early editions of his works. Here, too, are the ancient charters, study of which has shed a flood of light upon the history of the cathedral. Here is the grant made by King Eadgar to Bishop Ealhstane, with among its signatures that of, it may be, the greatest of all England's statesmen - ecclesiastics — St. Dunstan. Among these documents is the Bull of Pope Alexander II. confirming the election of Bishop Gisa of Lorraine.

Of the archæological relics two have special interest. One is a lantern-like object of carved oak, with sides of open tracery or fretwork, which is often described as a lantern, but was more probably the case which covered the pyx, the receptacle of the Blessed Sacrament. The modern usage in Roman churches is for the Holy Sacrament to be contained within a tabernacle: but in the Middle Ages it was enclosed in the pyx of

precious metal, which in its turn was cased with an ornamental wooden "canopy," and was suspended before the altar. The other relic of ecclesiastical antiquity is the crozier of Limoges metal-work, which was discovered early in the XIXth century in a stone coffin. The motive is the slaying of the Dragon of Evil by Michael the Archangel. It has been called the crozier of Savaric, but there is no evidence for this attribution. Savaric died in Italy in 1205, and the crozier, if his, would therefore be earlier, whereas the ornamentation is considered by experts to be of the XIIIth century.

In a room over the western cloister gallery is a collection of seals, together with other small objects connected with the cathedral, as well as many plans and documents elucidatory of the original plan of this great complex of ecclesiastical edifices, some of which have now vanished.

The Gateways

The most beautiful of these — the Chain-Gate Bridge—has been mentioned; but there are three others, none without interest. Two are in the market-place. The first is that which leads directly to the cathedral. It rejoices in the traditional name of the Penniless Porch—possibly because at one time a fee of a penny was exacted for entering the Close. The second is known as the Bishop's Eye: it leads from the market-place to the palace. It is by far the finer of the two—a stately four-turreted gateway tower, with two pairs

of windows, one above the other in front and rear. Between the windows which face the palace is a tall canopied niche. The Dean's Gate is picturesque, but not especially notable.

The Vicars' Close lies behind the Chain-Gate. It

The Gateway of the Close facing the Market-place of Wells called "The Bishop's Eye"
It dates from about 1450.

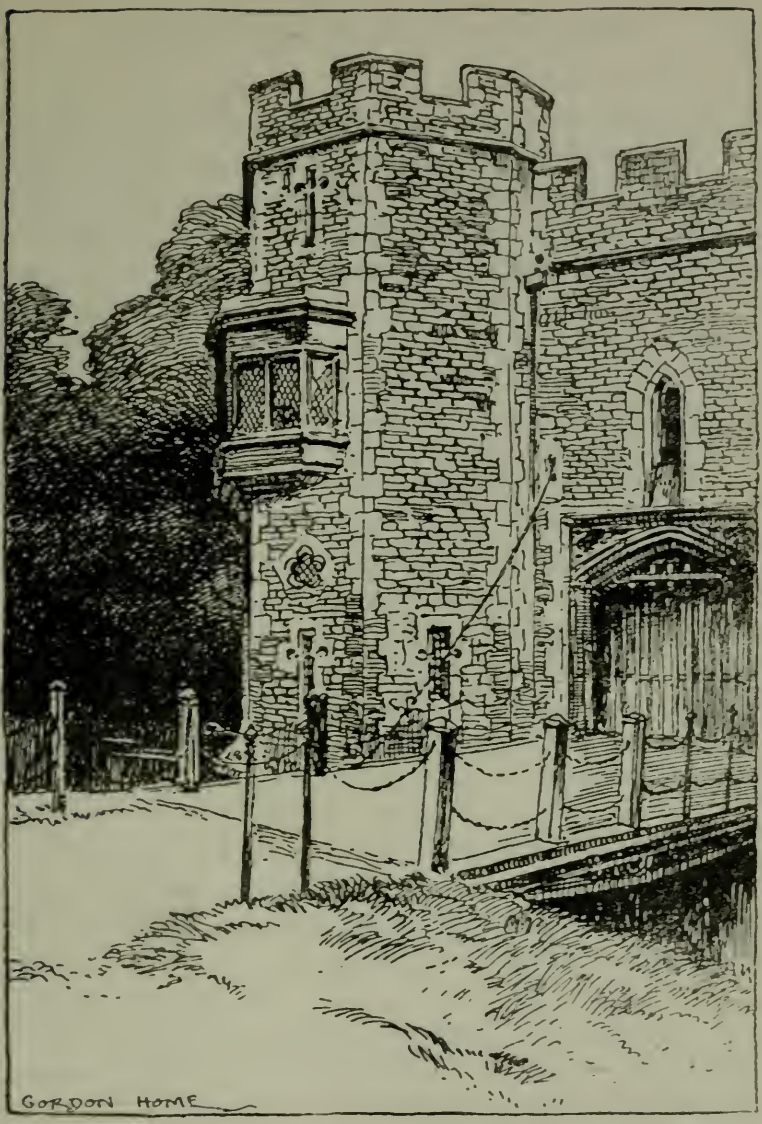
has been frequently described and lauded—somewhat beyond its architectural merits. It is a broad garden-like street with forty-two tiny Perpendicular dwellings, twenty-one on either side, of two rooms each, with tall octagonal chimney stacks. On the latter are armorial shields bearing the arms of Wells, of Beckington, and of his executors, Swan, Sugar and Pope.

At the farther end is the beautiful little chapel which is still used by the students of the Theological College. Though not dedicated until 1489, it contains fragments of XIIIth-century carving: it has been decorated with sgraffito and colour by Heywood Summer. At the entrance, by the Chain-Gate Bridge, is the dining hall. Within is the painting showing Bishop Ralph instituting the College of Vicars - Choral, who are kneeling before him. The picture was restored in Elizabethan times, for seventeen new figures in the costume of that age appear on the right. By the fireplace is the customary pulpit, and both the fireplace and the fire-dogs on the hearth deserve a glance.

Outside the entrance is an oriel window of three lights, resting upon a corbel and surmounted by a conical roof with a fleur-de-lys at its apex. The panels beneath the window openings are sculptured with four cinquefeuilles. It is not surprising that this beautiful work of architecture has been widely copied.

The Bishop's Palace

The greater part of the bishop's palace was built by Jocelin, enlarged by Robert of Burnell, who constructed the great hall, and completed by Beckington. It was unfortunately much mauled and altered about seventy years ago by Bishop Bagot, and parts of it are entirely spoiled or masked by modern work. However, with all this vandalism, it still remains almost the most perfect example of the dwelling of a mediæval bishop in existence.



GATEWAY OF THE PALACE OF THE BISHOPS OF BATH AND WELLS
It is a picturesque example of XIVth-century work of the time of Bishop Ralph of Shrewsbury.

The palace stands in a richly-wooded garden or parklet, encircled by a wall and foss, the single entrance being by a gatehouse on the western side and a drawbridge across the moat. The enclosure is a roughly outlined pentagon, with a bastion at each angle, and an additional one in the south-east curtain. The moat is filled with water from St. Andrew's Spring.

The original modest palace of the earlier bishops remains very much as when it was erected, with later additions made in order to adapt the ancient building to more modern purposes: the entrance hall, for example, has a Tudor fireplace. But as a whole the structure is Early English in style, one of the earliest dwelling-houses of that period in existence.

The great hall was built by Robert of Burnell about 1280; and was destroyed by the contemptible Bishop Barlow between 1549 and 1553. Its ruin was, by the way, completed by Bishop Law (1824–45), the brother of Lord Chief Justice Ellenborough, who caused the walls further to be breached and overthrown in order to produce a picturesque appearance!

The chapel was built shortly after the great hall, and survives, since even Barlow could hardly find or invent an excuse for demolishing it. The capitals and vaulting show the transition from Early English to Decorated in full progress.

The northern part of the palace, overlooking the moat, was built by Bishop Beckington, comprising —to quote William of Worcester's amazing English-French-Latin—"le botrye, cellarium, le bakehous, ad lez stues ad nutriendos pisces," also a "parlura" and

"alia porta ad introitum de le palays." After which one feels much inclined to put up a fervent prayer for deliverance from chroniclers who write a jumble of three languages. Unfortunately this block has been heavily restored, and its distinctive characteristics to a great extent destroyed.

Besides the palace, the deanery and archdeaconry are both worthy of notice.

The Deanery was rebuilt about 1480 by Dean Gunthorpe, and though vexed by modern insertions is an almost perfect specimen of a xvth-century house of the better class: the hall is especially fine, with two oriel windows and a music gallery. The little lavatory at which the guests washed their hands beneath a tap as they went to dinner is a noteworthy feature of an age which, though advancing in civilisation, was still somewhat primitive.

The Archdeaconry has been much modernised, but the fine hall possesses its splendid open timber roof unspoiled and intact. The choirmaster's house, at the east end of the cathedral, retains its Perpendicular porch, but is much spoiled and disfigured internally by modern partitions. The canons' houses, in the "Liberty" to the north of the cathedral, are either completely modernised or entirely spoiled by modern alterations. That, also, has been the fate of Bishop Bubwith's almshouse in the town near St. Cuthbert's Church. Its original plan was that of a single large hall, with a chapel at the end and cubicles along each side for the occupants.

In the Cloister of Wells Cathedral.
Looking towards the western walk and showing the southern buttress of the West Front.

St. Cuthbert's Church

The most notable church in the town is St. Cuthbert's —as it stands a rather Late Perpendicular structure, but with one of the finest Perpendicular towers in Somerset. From its style it is considered by Professor Freeman to have been built about 1430, and is clearly earlier than the body of the edifice. It is likely that the church was originally an Early English structure, to which the splendid Perpendicular tower was added. Afterwards the XIIIth-century body was replaced by a new building in the Tudor Perpendicular style—probably about 1500.

CHAPTER III

GLASTONBURY ABBEY

In so far as the West of England may be said to possess a religious capital, that capital was for many centuries the great Abbey of Glastonbury, once the premier monastic establishment in England, and always one of the first in point of magnitude and wealth, though represented to-day by a few isolated buildings and a few mutilated remnants of what was one of the largest churches in Europe.

If the legends which the monks of Glastonbury collected—and, it is to be feared, fabricated—may be trusted, it was at Glastonbury that the Christian Church of England was founded about A.D. 40–50 by Joseph of Arimathea, the friend of Christ. Unfortunately the legend is full of absurdities and, in its present form, was probably compiled not earlier than the XIth century. It repeats among other fables that of the mission of Pope Eleutherius to King Lucius of "Britain." The mission seems to have been a fact and it was to a prince named Lucius: but he ruled not the island of Britannia, but the fortress of Birtha (*cf.* the Byrsa of Carthage), or, as it was better known, Edessa, in Mesopotamia. When one finds this kind of

pseudo-history in a record, scepticism cannot be avoided.

At the same time a mass of absurd accretions does not quite prove the falsity of a legend. The story of the Minotaur who lived in the Labyrinth of Knossos and devoured boys and girls was long derided: it has recently been proved to contain a very solid and very unpleasant kernel of historical truth. A labyrinth existed, and boys and girls were forced therein to encounter bulls in savage sports which must almost always have ended in death to the human performers. Therefore, though the Glastonbury legend was "mangled, hashed and jumbled" by ignorant monks, it is not by any means certain that it does not enshrine a certain amount of solid fact.

Was it possible that Joseph of Arimathea could visit Britain shortly after the death of Christ? To that question the answer must be in the emphatic affirmative. In the Ist century of the Christian era it was much easier to travel from Palestine to Britain than it was in the XIIth—or the XVIIIth, for that matter. The Mediterranean world was resting securely beneath the shield of Rome: there was peace: there were good roads and plenty of vehicles and riding animals to be obtained by anyone who possessed the means. The Jews were spread all over the Roman Empire: there were many of them in Italy. If Jews could settle in Italy a Jew could certainly travel thither, and from Italy to Britain is no lengthy journey for a far-travelling Oriental. Britain, long before the beginning of the Roman Conquest in 43, was within the circle of Roman

civilisation and economic influence, and there was nothing to prevent any Jew from visiting the country, much less a wealthy and powerful Jew such as Joseph of Arimathea. After 45 or thereabouts the entire south of the island was directly under Roman rule, and it is at least likely that Jews were among the traders and speculators who flooded the newly-conquered region. There is nothing impossible or even improbable in the central statement of the legend; but it is not mentioned by Gildas or Bede—not that this counts for very much—and only appears about 1130 in the pages of William of Malmesbury, who distinctly states that it is a legend.

So much is certain, that there was a settlement at a very early period, perhaps about 400 B.C., on the small area of firm ground among lagoons and marshes which, later, was called the Isle of Avalon: *Ynys yr Afalla* (Isle of Apples) or *Ynys yr Vitrin* (Isle of Glass). It is easy to understand how such a name was found for an island which lay in the midst of what was then, in wet weather, a wide sheet of shallow water. As to the present name of the place, the word Glaston may indicate brilliance, which brings the investigator back to glass or a glassy lake: it may also mean "woad," the famous plant from which the Britons drew the green tattoo-ink used for staining their persons. Lastly, Sir John Rhys declares that Glast was a Celtic deity of the Underworld—that the name of the place seems purely Celtic. The English story that it was named after a man called Glaesting, who strayed thither in search of his sow, is a quite obvious invention, in view of

THE ABBOT'S KITCHEN AT GLASTONBURY ABBEY
From a drawing by Charles Wild, published in 1814.

the unimpeachable testimony to the existence of an early settlement.

As a matter of opinion it is not by any means improbable that the earliest roots of the Christian religion in Britain were in the west rather than the east, where all traces of it are rather scanty. Always remembering that the monks of Glastonbury were not scrupulous as legendeers, it was not at all impossible for a very early Christian missionary to reach Britain. Such a missionary would most probably go by the ancient trade route across Gaul to the mouth of the Loire and thence take ship to Cornwall. Journeying eastward he might very well skirt the marshes of Somerset and visit the Isle of Glass. For a wealthy Jewish merchant prince such a pilgrimage would be comparatively easy. A community of peaceful lake-side fishers and farmers might well attract the wanderer, especially if its isolated situation seemed to afford a guarantee against interference by the local magnates. In a word, whatever may be thought of the legend repeated by William of Malmesbury, there is nothing impossible in the central fact. The early Christian apostles were unquestionably extensive travellers, and Britain was nearer than India.

William of Malmesbury was shown an ancient charter of Glastonbury, which was written in archaic characters and difficult to read: it recorded a donation by a King of Damnonia to Worgret, Abbot of Ynys Vitrin. The name was illegible. William speaks of two other British abbots named Ludemund and Brigoret, and says that the latter was succeeded by Berthwald

—apparently the Boerwald who was abbot under Ine of Wessex about 705. It may be that the Romano-Celtic monastery was destroyed or deserted between 650 and 700: it was certainly refounded by Ine, who deposited therein the bones of Indractus, an Irish pilgrim who had been murdered in his passage across Wessex. Boerwald was, no doubt, the first of the sixty English abbots, but there is a good deal of confusion in the early lists and certainty is not attainable.

The earliest shrine, according to the story, was a chapel of wood and wicker—and this is highly probable. It was claimed that a more regular ecclesiastical foundation was established under Pope Eleutherius, and again there is nothing inherently improbable in the story. Other parts of the Glastonbury legend connect the monastery with St. Patrick and St. Bridget, and it is named as one of the three "perpetual choirs" where the service of God was carried on unceasingly day and night. This certainly indicates that very early in our insular history Glastonbury had an established position as one of the foremost Christian sanctuaries in the country.

Here it was, according to late Celtic tradition, that "King Arthur" was buried. There is no reasonable doubt that "Arthur"—his name was almost certainly Artorius—existed, but he was, just as certainly, a Romano-British general and no king at all—most emphatically not a Welsh hero. But that he was a man of mark in his day (about 460–520) there is little question, and it is not *impossible* that he was buried at Glastonbury. Neither is it *impossible* that he had a

wife named Gunhomara or "Guinevere," as the Welsh blundered the barbaric Roman-Vandal appellative, or that she was interred at his side. Also there is no doubt that, as Gerald of Wales declares, Abbot Henry of Blois did excavate beneath his church and did discover a burial which was said to be that of the Romano-British "Marshal of Britain," whom fond fancy and wild imagination had erected into a Welsh world-conqueror.

The excavation must have taken place before 1171, since Abbot Henry died in that year. Incidentally it might be added that Henry II. had strong reasons for wishing to discover the tomb of "Arthur," for he was warring with the Welsh, and there was a legend that they could never be conquered until the unknown burial-place of their hero had been brought to light. Indeed it looks as if Henry, taking a hint from Geoffrey of Monmouth's book, told his namesake the abbot that he must find a body which could be labelled as Arthur's.

The search was apparently unsuccessful for some time, but in the end, at a depth of sixteen feet, the diggers came upon a double sarcophagus hewn out of a single tree-trunk. In one compartment was the skeleton of a man of enormous height—though allowance must be made for the vivid imagination of Giraldus Cambrensis, and also for the fact that the seekers were doubtless thoroughly primed with the information that "Arthur" had killed nine hundred and sixty Englishmen with his own hand, and so were prepared to see marvels. In the second compartment

were the remains of a small yellow-haired person, who was assumed to be Guinevere. In or on the rude sarcophagus was a leaden tablet with an inscription: "Hic jacet sepultus inclitus rex Arthurus in insula Avalonia" (Here lies interred in the Isle of Avalon the renowned King Arthur).

It may probably be taken as granted that the discovery of the sarcophagus and the skeleton was a genuine one: had it been arranged by the abbot and his monks they would have provided plenty of accessories. They could never have imagined that "inclitus rex Arthurus" had been buried in a hollowed tree-trunk. What happened probably was that they really, by pure chance, discovered a prehistoric burial—presumably that of a Celtic chief and his wife—and that this burial was designated as that of the mythical "Arthur" by means of a forged inscription. No more can be said—except once more to impress upon the reader that "inclitus rex Arthurus" never existed, and that it is much less probable that Abbot Henry's discovery was "Arthur's" coffin than that Joseph of Arimathea came to Glastonbury. The details are not such as would have been found in connection with the interment of a Romano-British general of the early VIth century.

However that may be, "King Arthur's" relics were duly enshrined and eventually reinterred before the high altar in the presence of Edward I., who also had special reasons for desiring to kill the legend.

The real greatness of Glastonbury Abbey began with its greatest abbot, St. Dunstan, who assumed office

in or about 945. He not only reformed the very lax life of the monastery, but also rebuilt the church, taking care always to include within it the venerable "Vetusta Ecclesia," the palladium of Glastonbury. Three kings of the West-Saxon line were buried within it: Eadmund I. in 946, Eadgar the Peaceful in 975, and in 1016 the heroic Eadmund II., "Ironside," the last warrior monarch of his house. Cnut the Dane proved himself a benefactor to the abbey, and among other things presented it with a wonderful pall embroidered with peacocks, which was to cover the tomb of his dead rival. William of Malmesbury, however, says that in general the monastery was badly conducted, and condemns the conduct of some of the English abbots. But there is no doubt of its increasing wealth. In the Domesday Survey (1086) it is shown as possessing four hundred and forty-two hides in landed property, while a full tenth of the population of Somerset resided on its estates.

The first Norman abbot, Thurstin of Caen, was a great builder and a good steward, but his English monks rebelled against his reforming rule, and the troubles ended in a free fight between them and the retainers of William de Mohun, in which two were killed and fourteen wounded. William of Malmesbury on the whole is inclined to praise him, but admits that he was rash. His successor was Herlewin, another monk from Caen, also a great builder and organiser; finally in 1126 came Henry of Blois, who ruled until 1171, being also Bishop of Winchester. He was probably the greatest of the rulers of Glastonbury, and

it was at his direction that William of Malmesbury wrote the history of the antiquities of the abbey.

With Henry de Blois Glastonbury was in the full tide of prosperity, and on it, on the whole, it continued to float until the end in 1539. The only real interruption was between 1174 and 1219, during which period the bishops of Bath and Wells made determined efforts to bring under their control this great and powerful abbey which practically challenged their authority in their own diocese. High-handed Bishop Savaric, as has been observed elsewhere, did not hesitate to employ secular weapons in order to coerce the stubborn community. In the end the bishops surrendered their direct control in consideration of the cession by the abbey of four manors. The final settlement was not reached until 1275. Three years later, Edward I. and Queen Eleanor kept their Christmas at Glastonbury, and witnessed the interment of the relics of King Arthur.

The whole church and the greater part of the abbey, including the venerated Vetusta Ecclesia, were burned in 1184. Rebuilding was at once taken in hand, the first portion to be commenced being the Chapel of the Virgin, constructed on the site and, as it is said, following the plan, of the Vetusta Ecclesia—in which case that edifice was by no means contemptible in dimensions. The work continued with periods of slackness or intermission until 1350, by which year little remained to be added to what was probably the largest, certainly the most magnificent, of all the monasteries of England. Glastonbury's rival, St. Albans, could not boast of such a church. Yet few

THE CHAPEL OF THE VIRGIN, GLASTONBURY ABBEY

The thorn tree in the foreground is associated with the story of Joseph of Arimathea's staff which grew when placed in the ground.

abbots could refrain from making an addition of their own to the vast complex of edifices over which they presided. In the XIVth century the cloisters dormitory and fratry were rebuilt and the abbot's kitchen constructed. Up to the verge of the final catastrophe the masons were busy. Abbot Beere (1493–1524) built the Edgar Chapel at the east end of the already vast church, stabilised the central tower by the construction of inverted arches beneath it, as at Wells, and added other chapels, besides excavating and constructing the undercroft of St. Mary's Chapel. Even his unhappy successor, Richard Whyting, the last of the long line of abbots, was able to add some final touches before the hand of the destroyer came down to kill him and ruin Glastonbury for ever.

No word of reproach could be uttered against Abbot Whyting even by the commissioners who were sent down to examine him. He also did his best to conciliate the king and Cromwell, but he steadily refused to surrender his monastery to the royal power, and it is said that among his papers was found an argument against the iniquitous divorce of Queen Katherine of Aragon by Henry. On such grounds a charge of treason was concocted.

The actual crime alleged against Whyting was that he, together with two monks in charge of the treasury at Glastonbury, had feloniously concealed from the king some of the valuables of the abbey. That his death was previously determined upon is almost certain by the callous notes in Cromwell's "Remembrances" (*i.e.* reminders):

"1. Item. Certain persons to be sent to the Tower for the further examination of the Abbot of Glaston.

"2. Item. Councillors to give evidence against the Abbot of Glaston, Richard Pollard, Lewis Forstell and Thomas Moyle.

"3. Item. To see that the evidence is well sorted, and the indictment well drawn against the said abbot and his complycys.

"4. Item. The Abbot of Glaston to be tryed at Glaston and also executed there with his complycys."

The "trial" was, of course, a shameful and ghastly farce. Lord Russell and Pollard packed a jury, and suborned witnesses to say just what was needed. The result was a foregone conclusion. If any reason be needed it may be pronounced that Henry had resolved to throw before the papal throne the head of the blameless abbot of the most venerable monastery in England in grim challenge of that supremacy which he had haughtily denied.

On November 15th the feeble, ailing old man was hanged, drawn and quartered on Glastonbury Tor, together with two of his monks. He is said before suffering to have begged the king "to forgive him his great offences," which the writer considers to be an invention of his persecutors. That he died like a Christian may well be believed. That which is known of him shows that he was a pious man and a good, strong ruler of his community. When in health he enjoyed open-air sports, especially hunting. His hospitality was boundless.

With the judicial murder of the last abbot ruin

came upon Glastonbury. The wealth which fell to Henry VIII. and his greedy associates was really enormous, and furnishes without further investigation all the reasons which actuated Henry and Cromwell n the dissolution of this monastery. The revenues

The Market Cross of Glastonbury
Destroyed early in the xixth century.
From an engraving.

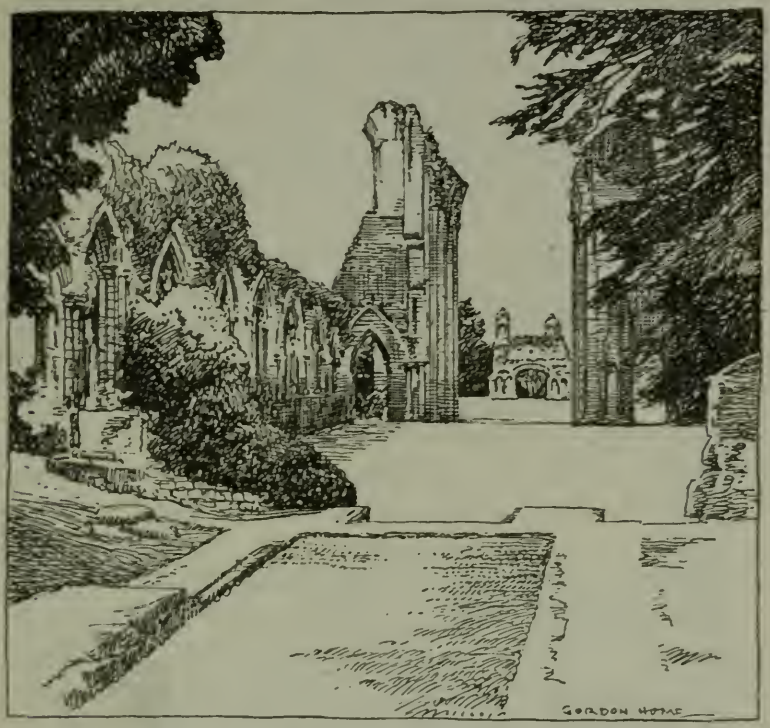
were assessed at £4085 per annum—nearly £40,000 in values of 1913. In ready cash there was £1100, and £2000 more was owing. The property confiscated included, besides the vestments, sixty thousand ounces of silver plate, much of it gilded, and a great quantity of gold plate and jewels. No doubt also the royal

commissioners embezzled a great deal. The value must be set down at many thousands of pounds, and the capital value of the abbey lands would probably be hardly less than £60,000 of the time, or about £500,000 in pre-war currency. Such was the end of the far-famed Abbey of Glastonbury.

The lands were granted to various creatures and tools of the king: there are extant letters testifying to the greed and sycophancy displayed, even by men of good birth and social position. The buildings were left to ruin and decay: in the end they were used as a convenient stone quarry. Let not "the barbarous islander" be blamed; he was no worse than a score of enlightened Popes who demolished the buildings of ancient Rome. Ignorant destruction of historic monuments is not extinct at the present day. It is not so clear that, in some respects, the loss to art was great; there seems to have been a great deal of repairing and incoherent patching in the church. The Chapel of the Virgin has to a great extent survived, possibly on account of the superstitious veneration felt for the edifice which occupied the site of the Vetusta Ecclesia. It is hardly likely that anything in the church was, artistically speaking, finer than this gem of Norman-Transitional builders. But the loss of the nave, which seems to have been the last word in Transitional Norman—perhaps the first of the Early English style —cannot, archæologically speaking, be repaired.

The ruins of the great church of Glastonbury Abbey have been described as "appalling in their dead eloquence." The only tolerably intact portion consists

of the Chapel of the Virgin with its undercroft; fragments of the walls of the nave and choir; the two great eastern piers of the central tower, and parts of



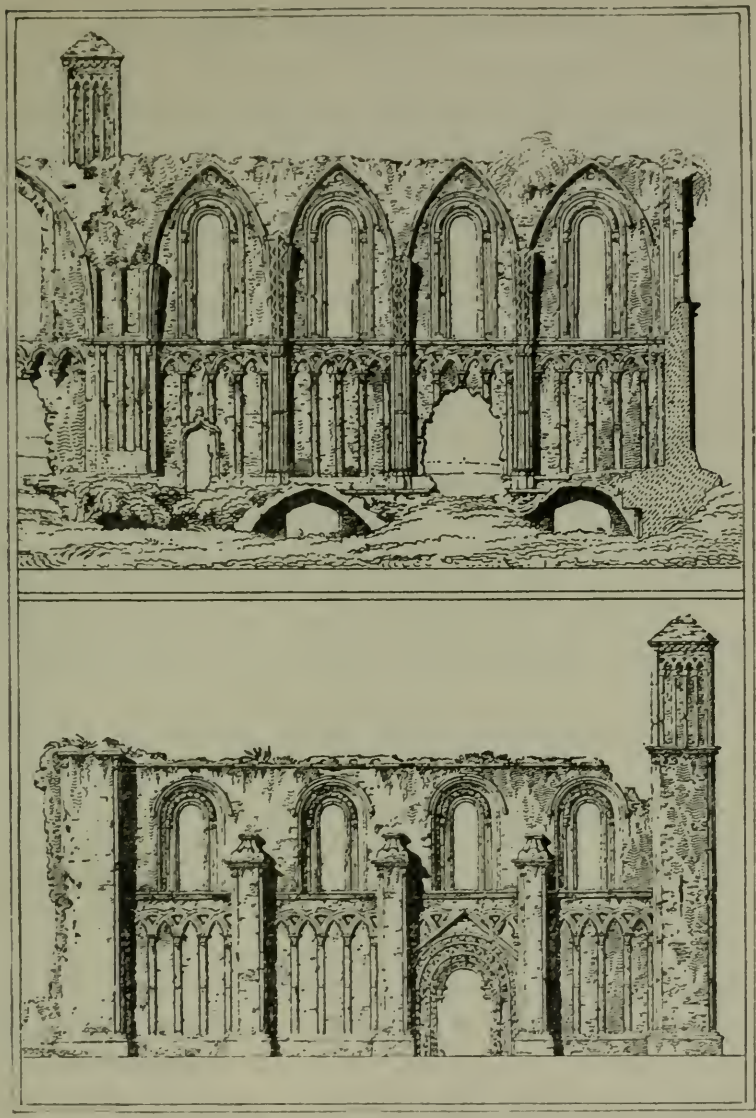
THE RUINS OF GLASTONBURY ABBEY CHURCH FROM THE LADY CHAPEL

the transeptal walls. Beyond the church there remains one complete and intact monastic building in the form of the abbot's kitchen, an octagonal stone structure in perfect preservation, with a double louvre chimney stack. It may be seen to the right of the road coming

from Taunton. Of the other buildings of the monastery only the ground-plans now remain. The site of Abbot Beere's Loretto chapel, built about 1515, after a visit to Italy, was discovered in 1919 by Mr. F. Bligh Bond, and two years later the footings of a massive wall evidently designed to enclose the Vetusta Ecclesia were brought to light. Mr. Bond claimed, unquestionably with perfect sincerity, to have been aided in his work of discovery and identification by "spirit writing."

The Chapel of the Virgin is an exquisite example of Transitional Norman architecture. It is a simple oblong in plan, and this very simplicity tends to confirm the belief that it really does occupy the site of the Vetusta Ecclesia. When complete it possessed at each angle a square turret with pyramidal cap. It had four windows on each side, separated by buttresses. Between the first and second buttress on each side was a doorway. At the west end was a triplet of three remarkably graceful Romanesque lancets.

The chapel was built in two stages. The first was enriched by interlaced and enriched blind arcading; above it were the windows. The turrets were remarkable. To the eaves of the roof they were almost plain, but at each corner were recessed and enriched by a slender shaft with a capital. On top of this was a platform, and on the platform stood the fourfold crowning glory, a square turret with an enriched cornice and a pyramidal cap; all four sides covered with, perhaps, the most delicately graceful interlaced arcades which Anglo-Norman artists ever executed.



SOUTH AND NORTH ELEVATIONS OF THE CHAPEL OF THE VIRGIN

These drawings by C. Wild were made shortly before 1807, and show the chapel as it stood at that time before any restoration had taken place.

The east end of the chapel opened into a galilee built to connect it with the main church. The interior is almost precisely similar in style and workmanship to the exterior—interlaced arcading on the lower stage and Romanesque windows above, but the latter are enclosed inside by very graceful pointed archways.

From the remains of the gutter and other details it is clear that the roof was of a very unusual type—a "hipped" one—that is to say, sloping on all four sides. There seems to be no question of this, and in that case it becomes almost certain that the building did reproduce the lines of the Vetusta Ecclesia. However that may be, it must have been by far the most purely beautiful edifice at Glastonbury, veritably the swan-song of Romanesque art, erected at the very moment when it was being supplanted by Gothic.

The remains of the great church of St. Peter and St. Paul are so fragmentary that time is wasted in detailed description. It is difficult to agree with the verdict that they appal, but they are assuredly most pathetically impressive in their ruin, and no one who possesses a grain of true religious feeling can fail to experience a certain sensation of awe as he stands among them, on the greensward which has replaced the pavement, and reflects that, all legends set aside, here was for a thousand years the greatest and most venerated Christian sanctuary in the west, if not in all England.

Near the entrance, close to the Chapel of the Virgin, is to be seen a thorn tree, one of the descendants of the Holy Thorn which, according to legend, sprang

up on the spot where Joseph of Arimathea planted his staff at the end of his long pilgrimage. It is said that it always flowered on Christmas Day, and even Camden solemnly records that in the age of faith there was in the abbey a walnut tree which regularly broke into full leaf on St. Barnabas' Day. Wonderful indeed is faith, and the writer will at least never attempt to deny its influence.

Interest in Glastonbury is not exhausted by the abbey. The market cross is modern, but probably some fragments of the ancient one may be found by careful examination in the walls of the neighbouring houses. Glastonbury is, in fact, built out of the monastic ruins. In the High Street is the George Hotel, once the Pilgrims' Inn, with its characteristic xvth-century façade. A little farther up is the abbot's court-house or tribunal, apparently also of the xvth century. It is now, more or less appropriately, a solicitor's office.

Beyond the court-house is the imposing town church dedicated to St. John the Baptist, a stately Perpendicular edifice with a tower ranking among the finest in many-towered Somerset. The stone pulpit is worthy of notice: more so is the admirable east window: and a glance should be spared for the tombs in the interior, since some of them are very probably relics of the abbey. Among them is the monument of a man named Camel, with the usual punning heraldry displaying the "Ship of the Desert."

Anyone who has a day to spare should make a point of wandering about the little town and searching for

fragments of the abbey masonry and sculpture, of which much is built up in the houses. The famous Tor also must not be forgotten. On its summit there stood a XIIIth-century church of St. Michael, of which to-day only the tower remains, forming a conspicuous landmark for many miles around. On the side looking towards the town are some quaint sculptures. The more interesting portrays the Devil in one pan of a pair of scales vainly attempting to weigh down the other, in which is a block supposed to represent a Bible or a human soul. The other carving is more matter-of-fact; it shows a woman milking a cow.

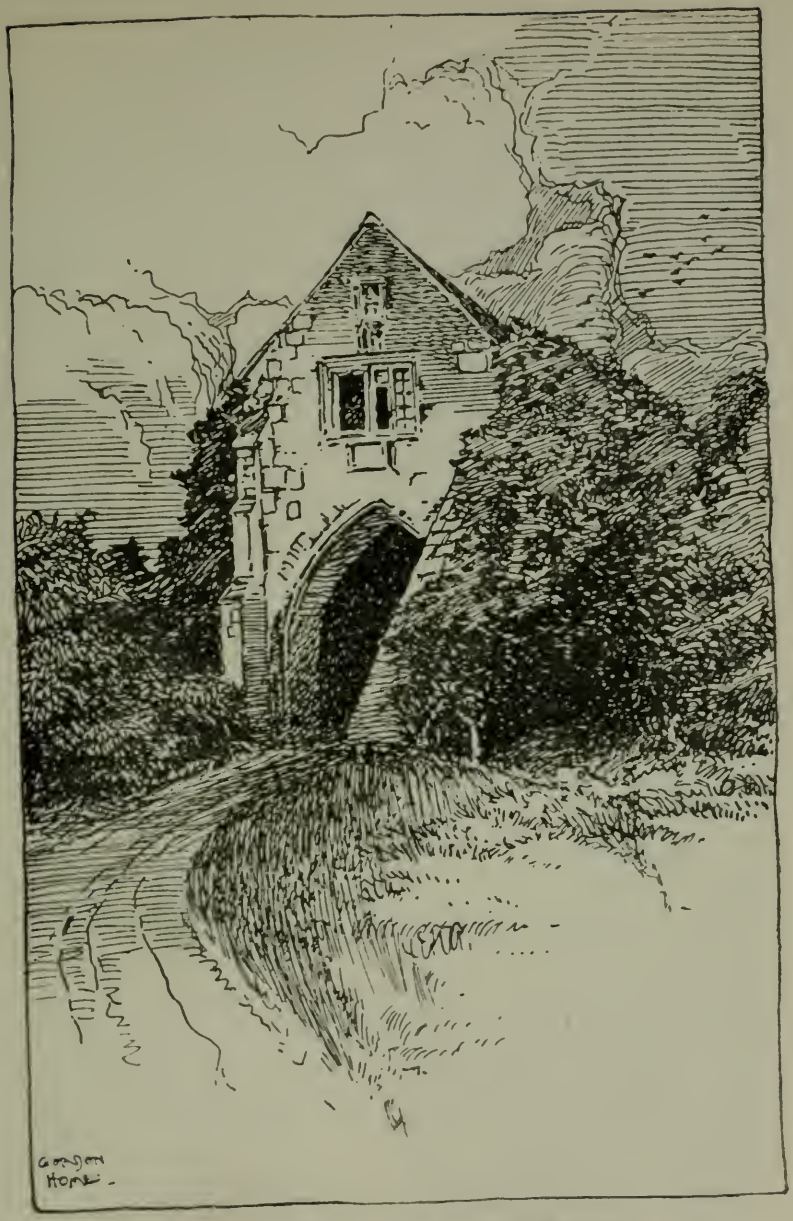
CHAPTER IV

CLEEVE ABBEY—DUNSTER CHURCH AND PRIORY—MINEHEAD CHURCH

Cleeve Abbey

Close to Washford, six miles from Minehead, on the road to Taunton, are the ruins of the Cistercian Abbey of Cleeve, situated in a beautiful valley which well deserves its monkish title of Vallis Florida—the Dale of Flowers. Whatever opinions may otherwise be entertained concerning the monks of the rule of Citeaux, it cannot be denied that they had a genius for selecting beauty spots. Cleeve is no exception to the general rule of Cistercian houses; its situation is as fine as those of the majority of its fellows, though it cannot compare with that of Tintern, or of Fountains.

Cleeve Abbey has been called the ecclesiastical gem of the district—which is perhaps saying very little, for if England be mapped into twenty-mile squares very few of them will be found devoid of a jewel of this description. The true interest of Cleeve is that it has preserved its domestic buildings almost intact, whereas in the majority of English monasteries the church is the principal surviving feature and the



THE GATEHOUSE OF CLEEVE ABBEY

It was built or rebuilt by the last abbot, William Dovell, who surrendered the monastery at the Dissolution.

domestic portions are fragmentary or non-existent. At Cleeve it is the church which has vanished.

The house was founded between 1186 and 1191 by William de Roumare, grandson of a baron of the same name who played a considerable part in Anglo-Norman history under Henry I. and Stephen. As William III. de Roumare died before 1198, the building of the abbey probably was begun some years earlier. It was founded as a prebend of the famous Norman Abbey of Bec, but as the distance made it difficult for the latter effectively to control it, the Somersetshire house was leased to the Cistercians in return for an annual rent of forty marks.

Very little is known of its history, since it claimed exemption from episcopal visitation. The first abbot was a certain Ralph, who brought with him twelve monks from the Cistercian house of Reresby. It was never a large or wealthy house; the largest known number of monks was twenty-eight. At the Dissolution there were only seventeen, and its yearly rental was £155. It may at one time have been richer, for its last two abbots were extravagant, and seem to have depleted their resources by making presents in order to gain the support of the local gentry. Certainly this poor little abbey had the good-will of its neighbours, for it is on record that they were very anxious to avert its dissolution, urging amongst other things that there were in it seventeen priests of honest life who kept hospitality. Among these seventeen was John Hooper, afterwards an extreme Protestant bishop. The abbey was granted to Robert, Earl of Sussex,

and by him or his successors the church was destroyed for the value of its materials; but the domestic buildings survived and were used as the outbuildings of a farm. Their roofs, for obvious reasons, were not demolished, and the result is that they have been wonderfully well preserved. They are now carefully maintained by the Luttrells, lords of the manor, and furnish an almost unsurpassed example of the domestic portion of a monastery.

The approach to the abbey is by an ancient stone bridge over the babbling Roadwater rivulet. The first building reached is the gatehouse, a structure apparently of the XIIIth century, with a Perpendicular doorway and window. Above the window is a figure of the Virgin flanked by two empty niches, and over the doorway appears a Latin inscription:

> Porta pateni esto
> Nulli claudaris honesto.

Which may be Englished thus:

> Gate, be thou ever open—
> Closed to no honest man.

On the rear face is the name of the last abbot, William Dovell, who presumably restored the gatehouse.

The principal buildings are disposed, according to the rule of Citeaux, round three sides of a quadrangle, on the fourth side of which is a wall, the last remnant above ground of the church. The western side contains what remains of the cloisters. Opposite, on the eastern side, is a range of Early English buildings, comprising

THE MONKS' DORMITORY OF CLEEVE ABBEY
It is lighted by Early English lancets and preserves traces of the separate sleeping cubicles.

THE EARLY ENGLISH CHAPTER-HOUSE AT CLEEVE ABBEY
Showing the west side of the Garth where the Cloister Walk still remains.

on the ground level the chapter-house and a number of other chambers, one of which seems to have been the sacristy, while another was unquestionably the common room of the monks. This room has graceful Early English windows with lias shafts. The columns which supported the floor of the dormitory have disappeared, only the bases remaining.

The chapter-house opens into the cloister by a somewhat broad and squat Early English doorway, flanked by two most charming and graceful windows of the same period, still retaining their centre-shafts and tracery. The three together form a really delightful triad, probably the most beautiful feature in the whole abbey.

On the upper floor is the dormitory: it once extended for the entire length of the block, but over the common room the floor has fallen in. The day staircase descends to the cloister beside the chapter-house; of the night stairs by which the monks went to the church for the first service (at 2 A.M.) nothing remains but the doorway. The dormitory is an apartment simple in detail, as became the ascetic Cistercian tradition, but excellent in general appearance and proportions: the Early English lancets are graceful and pleasing. The independent sleeping cubicles are noticeable.

On the south side are, below, the rooms devoted to the everyday life of the monastery—kitchen, storerooms, cellar, etc., while above is the refectory, a splendidly proportioned chamber fifty-two feet long and twenty-two feet wide, with nine well-designed

Perpendicular windows, which retain intact their mullions and tracery. The roof is also intact; it is of walnut wood, its beams resting upon corbels sculptured with angels. The recess of the pulpit, from which the brethren were edified by pious reading as they took their meals, is to be seen in the south wall with the steps which led up to it, and on the eastern wall is still faintly to be discerned a wall-painting of the Crucifixion. At the west end are what were originally the abbot's lodgings; part is now private, but close to the refectory is a small chamber decorated with wall-paintings of female saints (St. Thekla, St. Margaret, and St. Katharine), which was presumably the superior's private sitting-room or perhaps his oratory.

Poor though Cleeve was, it must have possessed a very fine or, at all events, a large church, for, judging from its ground-plan, which has been laid bare, it was more than one hundred and sixty feet long. To all appearance it dated from the earliest period of the abbey: the five bays of the nave had cylindrical Romanesque or Transitional piers. The transepts had each two chapels, and there was a short choir without aisles—a typically Cistercian arrangement. The disappearance of this church, interesting as it no doubt was, is the less to be regretted when there is considered the remarkable, almost unique survival of the domestic establishments of the monks.

In the Cloister Garth of Cleeve Abbey

The wide arch to the left of the doorway to the Refectory staircase spanned the monks' lavatory. The three Perpendicular windows light the finely preserved Refectory.

Dunster Church and Priory

Dunster, which indicates by its name its pure Celto-British origin, is a place extraordinarily picturesque in itself, and is otherwise full of interest. The main street or cheaping place, as it would more appropriately be termed, is most delightful, bordered on both sides by houses of varying antiquity, but rarely unsightly, with, in the midst, the octagonal Yarn Market, with its spreading eaves projecting far beyond the hewn timber supports, its quaint little terminal lantern and its lateral dormers. Overlooking the village from its rock stands the true Dunster—the actual "Castle-on-the-Hill," and at the end is the Church of St. George, the finest ecclesiastical edifice in western Somerset.

Dunster — Dunestorre — the Tower-on-the-Hill — must by its name have been a stronghold at an early period of our history. By William the Conqueror it was granted to a Norman baron, William de Moyun,[1] near St. Lô. It is distinctly stated in the Domesday Survey that this baron, the first of the de Mohuns to settle in England, lived at "Torre," where was his castle. In all he held sixty-eight manors in the west, of which fifty-five were in Somersetshire. Dunster was "Caput honoris"—head of the honour or capital of the barony. Lord William I., amongst other things, was a breeder of horses, as is evident from Eyton's *Domesday Studies*. Somewhere between 1090 and

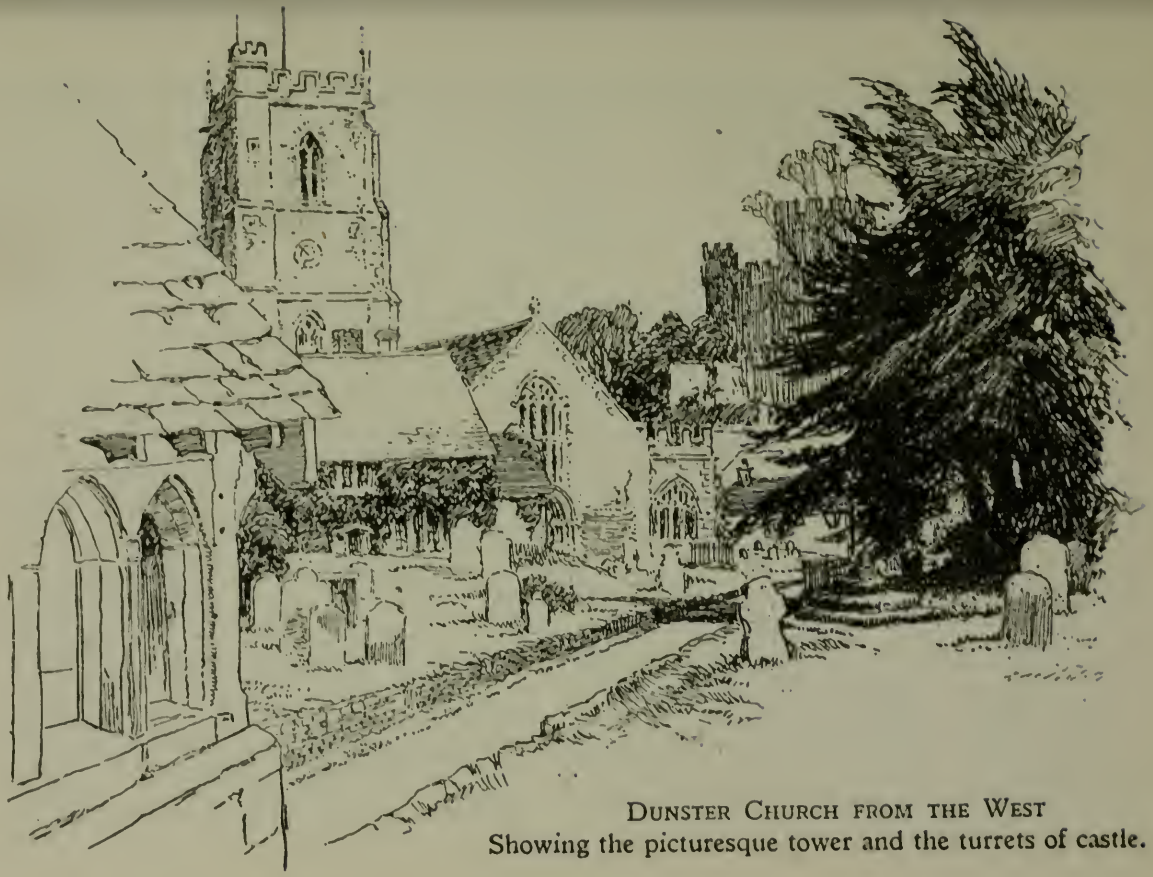
[1] This was the original form of the name de Mohun.

1100 he, together with his wife Adeliza, granted the Church of St. George with various lands and a tithe of his brood mares to John of Villula, Bishop of Bath and Wells, in order that it might be "built and exalted." Accordingly it was constituted a cell of Bath Abbey under the rule of a prior.

The family of William de Moyun held their lands in Somerset for more than two centuries in weal and woe: the last of them, John, died childless in 1376. His widow followed him in 1404; and thereupon the lands of the de Mohuns descended to Sir Hugh Luttrell, son of Sir Andrew and Elizabeth Lady Luttrell of Chilton in Devonshire, to whom Lady de Mohun had sold them during life. Since then the Luttrells have been lords of Dunster.

The result of William de Moyun's action regarding the church was a curious situation. Until 1499 it was used by the monks of the priory in common with the townsmen. A dispute arose in that year, which was referred to the Abbot of Glastonbury as arbitrator. Abbot Beere decided that the monks should possess the eastern part of the church, and the townsmen the nave; the rood-screen was erected to mark the division: but the arrangement only lasted for forty years, for in 1539 Dunster's little priory shared the fate of the greater establishment at Bath. For the last forty years the church, as has been quaintly noticed, served two masters, and it continues to do so at the present day, since the priory portion belongs to the Luttrells and is used by them as a private chapel.

Externally Dunster Church does not appear parti-



DUNSTER CHURCH FROM THE WEST
Showing the picturesque tower and the turrets of castle.

cularly interesting. It is a rather long and low Perpendicular edifice, with a tower ninety feet in height, but hardly to be reckoned among the finest in the West Country. In fact from the outside the church of Dunster appears somewhat disappointing.

That impression disappears when it is entered. In the first place there is the outstanding fact that we are in two churches under one roof. There are two rood-screens—one, the outer, being that which was erected by the Dunsterians in 1499, while the inner one is the original screen dividing the chancel from the nave, and is considerably more ancient. The arrangements of the church have now been re-organised so that as far as the inner screen it is used for public worship only, the comparatively small portion to the eastward being the Luttrell Chapel.

The townsmen, when the award of the Abbot of Glastonbury had been pronounced, completely remodelled their part of the church, and the monks, not to be outdone, did the same with theirs, so that we now see a building which is almost entirely Perpendicular in style. There is, however, a curious Early English archway with the jambs cut away, giving it the aspect of a Moorish opening. The great screen of the townspeople is splendid, without doubt one of the finest in all the West Country. The timber roof has been restored, but the sculptured bosses remain from the original work. The octagonal font may be noticed: its sides are sculptured with the somewhat gruesome subjects of the emblems of the Crucifixion and the Five Wounds.

There are a number of ancient monuments in the church, but not so many as might have been expected, because William I. de Moyun was buried at Bath, and others of his house lie elsewhere. The finest of them is the canopied table tomb of Sir Hugh de Luttrell, the first of his line to be lord of Dunster, and his wife. The effigies are badly mutilated, but the monument itself has much of beauty and grace: the little heads upon the crockets of the canopy are especially fascinating. Elsewhere is the incised slab tomb of Lady Elizabeth Luttrell, who died in 1493, and others of the same family. The de Mohuns, who dominated Somerset for two hundred years, are represented only by two ladies, who are not, apparently, identified beyond cavil.

Minehead Church

Minehead is known to-day principally as a pleasant watering-place, but it possesses a parish church of considerable interest. It is splendidly placed in the Old Town on North Hill, and not only has an imposing appearance from the sea front, but also commands a magnificent outlook over land and sea.

It is in the main a building of the XIVth century, with a nave, chancel, and a north aisle. The body of the church is separated from this aisle by an arcade of excellent contour, the arches being borne upon hexagonal piers. The chancel and its aisle are confined within a most elaborate and beautiful rood-screen of

oak. Its delicately carved and fretted Perpendicular arcades of very fine outline are separated by piers of

MINEHEAD CHURCH
A peep from the "Old Town."

more massive plan than usual, from which springs a wooden fan vault supporting a gallery or pulpitum—an arrangement which, I think, exists nowhere else

in the west. The turret by which access was gained to this pulpitum was, it is believed, used as a lighthouse. The western tower is Late Perpendicular, and is eighty-seven feet in height. On its south side is a triple niche, containing God with the Crucified Son between His knees. On the east side is a representation of St. Michael weighing souls in his scales — a favourite subject of the time—with the Virgin and the Devil bringing their influence to bear on opposite sides.

The church contains at least one remarkable monument—the Perpendicular canopied tomb of a priest, possibly an archdeacon or a canon, who died at Minehead. His effigy shows him fully vested and holding the chalice.

The communion table, like the screen, is also of xvth-century woodwork: its principal decorations are a carved border representing drapery which is supported by crowned angels. The octagonal font is elaborately sculptured with representations of various saints, and seems to belong to the earlier period of the church. Another feature probably unique in the West Country is the wooden arch separating the chancel from the vestry.

CHAPTER V

TAUNTON'S CHURCHES—BRIDGWATER CHURCH—WESTON ZOYLAND CHURCH—ATHELNEY ABBEY

Taunton's Churches

Taunton, the town on the Tone founded by King Ine of Wessex as a fortress at the end of the VIIth century, is usually rated as the "county-town" of Somersetshire, and certainly has all the atmosphere and appearance of a provincial capital. It is a busy, prosperous-seeming place of 25,000 inhabitants, the centre of the cider-apple vale of Taunton Dean. It is interesting, too, to notice the large area over which it spreads, pointing to the fact that it was for long a straggling half-agricultural, half-industrial settlement without walls.

Its history contains little of special interest until the Great Civil War, though it had the fortune to be captured by Perkin Warbeck's levies in 1497. But in the Civil War it came to the front as a Parliamentary stronghold in the midst of a sea of Royalist garrisons and Royalist armies. It was besieged by the Cavalier armies of the west under Goring and Grenvile, desperately defended by Colonel Robert Blake, relieved

by Colonel Weldon, again blockaded, and not finally rescued until the summer of 1645, when Fairfax and Cromwell, having crushed King Charles's army at Naseby, came down to reconquer the west. Taunton suffered fearfully; much of it was laid in ruins by the Royalist bombardment, but it held out stoutly, and became known as the abode of a peculiarly obstinate population of Puritans—in fact, a sort of Puritan capital in the West of England. Its inhabitants were active participants in Monmouth's rebellion of 1685, and paid a terrible price for their rash partisanship. It has always been considered as a stronghold of nonconformity, and to-day possesses Independent, Methodist and Wesleyan colleges. None the less there is a strong Anglican element, and Taunton possesses three fine churches, though the tower of the best of them is unfortunately a reconstruction.

Nevertheless the parish church of St. Mary Magdalene is a noble cathedral-like edifice, well worthy of being styled the Pride of Taunton. It is a typical West-country Perpendicular building: the body seems to be of the period 1450–1500, for the arches are somewhat flattened. The tower is a faithful reconstruction of the original one, incorporating much of the ancient materials, so that it is in no real sense modern—simply a careful restoration. It is built in five stages, including the parapet. The lowest stage has a large window above, and somewhat overpowering, the doorway. The three succeeding stages have on each side a pair of highly elaborated windows, while the whole structure is finished off with an open

parapet and four tall and ornate pinnacles. The contour of the tower is excellent, it is extremely well proportioned, as well as stately: its defect seems to be that it is overloaded with decoration. Its height is one hundred and sixty-four feet.

Internally the church is extremely imposing, with its stately nave and chancel and double aisles. The arches are supported by piers consisting of a cruciform core, with a shaft at the end of each arm. The capitals of the latter are sculptured cherubs. The oak roof of the nave and chancel is one of the most superb in England, not surpassed in absolute beauty by even such a triumph of fantasy as that of St. David's Cathedral. The chancel arch gives a fine impression of height and majesty not often witnessed in a parish church.

The bulk of the glass, the ornamentation and the fittings are modern, but they are handsome and in keeping with the purpose of the building. Of monuments there are many, several of them sadly recalling the fearful waste of good human life in the Great European War. Two men of more than ordinary merit are among those commemorated—Brigadier-General Cecil Godfrey Rawling, famous in pre-war days as the discoverer of the source of the great river Brahmaputra, who fell in October, 1917, at the head of the 62nd Infantry Brigade; and Captain Cecil Prowse, R.N., who commanded the *Queen Mary* at the Battle of Jutland and perished with almost the whole of his splendid ship's company.

Elsewhere is to be seen a memorial to Sir Robert Seppings, Surveyor of the Royal Navy, the last great

improver of the ancient days of the wooden walls. Sir Robert died in 1842. Of men especially connected with Taunton, two are worthy of note: Joseph Alleine, a famous Puritan divine of the XVIIth century, and Robert Grave, founder of some almshouses in the town.

St. James's Church, near the bridge, has a tower not unlike that of St. Mary Magdalene tower, but perhaps more pleasing, being less heavily ornamented. It also has been rebuilt. In the interior the most noteworthy object is the font, an octagon of two stages, sculptured with scenes from the life of Christ. It also has a memorial tablet to a forgotten hero of the miserably mismanaged Crimean War of 1854–55. Colonel Lacey Walter Giles Lea, commonly known as Lacey Yea, who was killed on June 18th, 1855, in the midst of the hopeless and mad assault on the Great Redan of Sebastopol. The assault was to be a general one, French and English co-operating. The French attack failed utterly and at all points, but though its failure was obvious before the English advanced, Lord Raglan sent our men forward lest the unfriendly French staff should charge him with the responsibility for the defeat, as was certain, according to his opinion. The result was a murderous repulse and the death of one of the best senior officers in the army.

THE CANOPIED TOMB OF SIR HUGH DE LUTTRELL
IN DUNSTER CHURCH
He was the first of the Luttrells to be lord of Dunster.

Bridgwater Church

The parish church of St. Mary the Virgin at Bridgwater has an architectural interest of a kind rare in Somersetshire's sacred edifices, for it possesses a slender graceful spire one hundred and seventy-four feet high. It is mainly a Perpendicular building, dating from the first half of the xvth century, but portions of the nave and north porch show Decorated work, while the west end is clearly Early English. The piers and arches of the Perpendicular nave and aisles rather resemble those of St. Mary Magdalene at Taunton, but have not the cherub capitals of the shafts. Above the porch is a priest's chamber, lighted by a curious window of two intersecting triangles, while there is a remarkable "squint" to enable those in the porch to see the high altar. This of Bridgwater is unusually large, and has iron cross-stanchions which divide it into panels. The interior has been much restored, but there still remain the ancient oak corporation pews with the screen, though it has been removed from the chancel and used to confine the pews.

The altar-piece is remarkable and has a curious history: it is a painting of the Bolognese school representing the Descent from the Cross, and was captured on board a French privateer during the Seven Years' War, and presented to the church by the Hon. A. Poulett, M.P. for Bridgwater. Mr. Poulett's Christian name, by the way, was Anne, arising out of the fact that Queen Anne had been his godmother.

In the churchyard is buried the virulent Whig journalist, John Oldmixon, who died in 1742. He was as dull as violent, and earned the bitter contempt of Pope, who satirised him in the famous *Dunciad*, but there was some excuse for his partisanship, for in his youth he saw something of Sedgmoor and the Bloody Assize of Jeffreys, and no one who witnessed those episodes was likely afterwards to be distinguished by calm impartiality. Pope's satire probably troubled him little, for his honest if vicious work for his party was rewarded by them with the comfortable post of collector of customs at Bridgwater.

It was in Bridgwater that the hapless—and, it must be added, not very respectable—James Duke of Monmouth had his headquarters on the day preceding the Battle of Sedgmoor, and it was from the tower that he made the final reconnaissance upon which he formed his not ill-conceived plan of action. The wide moor over which his troubled glance roved was then less cultivated and much wetter than now, although even to-day it is badly waterlogged in a rainy season. Banks rose here and there and deep dykes —"rhines"—intersected the terrain, one of which was to wreck Monmouth's scheme of attack.

Weston Zoyland Church

Conspicuous then, as now, was the tall square tower of St. Mary's Church at Weston Zoyland, rising to a height of one hundred and four feet. It must once have been almost as magnificent as the great

towers of St. Mary Magdalene and St. James at Taunton. It is built in four stages: and each of the three upper ones has a Perpendicular window on each side, flanked by canopied niches. Needless to say these have been robbed of their images, though in two there remain some battered remnants of statuary.

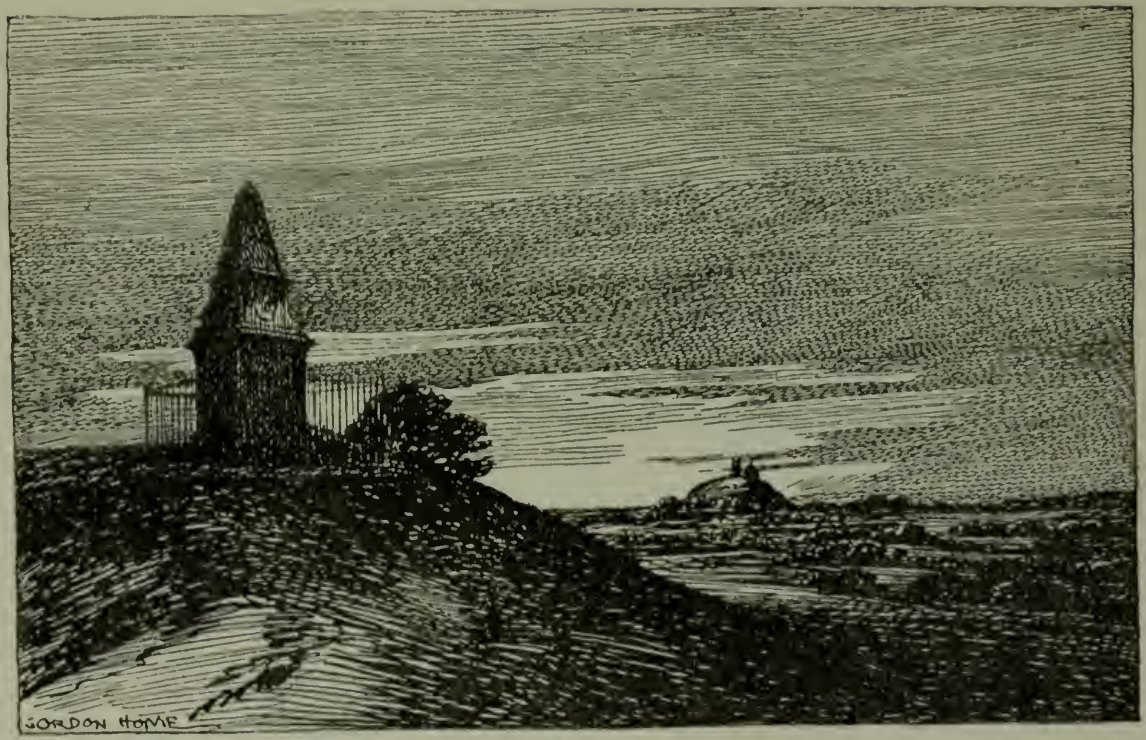
The church has a nave with aisles, transepts, and chancel; the latter is the oldest portion, being Decorated Gothic in style, but the east window is Perpendicular, as is the rest of the building. The piers and arches closely resemble those in Bridgwater Church: the roof of the nave is a splendid example of xvth-century carved oak; the tie-beams are practically dwarf screens with a tier of rich open arcading rising above the ornate beams proper: the king-posts also are a mass of elaboration. In the north transept is a fine recess tomb, evidently of a priest; the canopy is of excellent Decorated art, just verging upon Perpendicular.

It was in Weston Zoyland that Louis de Duras, Earl of Faversham, the incompetent French commander of the royal army, had his headquarters on the night of Sedgmoor, and after the battle five hundred prisoners of the rebel forces were crowded beneath the beautiful roof of the church. Eighty of them were wounded, of whom five died within the walls, while overhead the mental and bodily misery of the poor wretches was mocked by the joyous pealing of the bells, for which triumphal work the campanologists were paid 11s. 8d., while 5s. 8d. was spent upon the fumigation of the church, after the unhappy prisoners had been marched forth to death and slavery

worse than death. There is no need to tell over again the story of the last battle fought upon English soil—how the attack of "King Monmouth's" levies was baulked by the Bussex Rhine—how Faversham allowed General Churchill to fight the battle, while he himself put on his best uniform and arranged his wig—how the Somersetshire clowns stood up to the Guards and the Tangier Brigade like heroes, and beat back the Blues pike in hand, fighting like old soldiers till the royal artillery shattered their ranks and all was over. It has been calculated that a loss of about one-sixth in killed and wounded is sufficient to unsteady average troops. Monmouth's raw levies endured heavier punishment than that before they broke. The story of the savage vengeance taken by James is perhaps the blackest in English history. Truly the memories which brood over the spire of Bridgwater and the tower of Weston Zoyland are grim and blood-stained.

Athelney Abbey

About four miles south-west of Bridgwater two low knolls, separated by a slight depression, rise out of the flats of the River Tone, the two together forming a single topographical feature. The eastern knoll is slightly the higher of the two, and the entire area is about twenty-four acres. In very wet weather the twin knoll is still practically insulated. This is Athelney—the Royal Island or Isle of Nobles, *i.e.* the *comitatus* of gentlemen surrounding the king—in which King Alfred the Great took refuge in the winter of 877–8,



THE MONUMENT ON ATHELNEY ISLAND, WITH BOROUGHBRIDGE HILL IN THE DISTANCE
Marking the site of the monastery founded or re-founded by Alfred the Great.

and whence he emerged in the spring to smite the Danes and save England. In remembrance of the deliverance he founded a monastery on the isle—or, as is more probable, enlarged and endowed a little community already in existence. It always seems to have been a small and poor community, and never to have possessed any remarkable buildings. William of Malmesbury says that the monks were few and poor. The church seems to have been built upon a foundation of piles and to have possessed apsidal chapels. To-day no appreciable vestige survives of the abbey which commemorated the gratitude to Heaven of England's noblest monarch for deliverance from utmost peril.

It should be added that there is some reason to believe that Alfred's headquarters during the momentous period were on Boroughbridge Hill a mile to the north. It is indeed traditionally called King Alfred's fort. It may be added that while Alfred would best know the actual spot of his precarious sojourn, there were good reasons why he should not encumber an important military position with monastic buildings, and accordingly selected the less strategically important site of "Athelney." Boroughbridge may have been the Fort of Athelney, and the islet the Monastery of Athelney. Later, a name which was proper to Boroughbridge Hill became confined to the abbey knoll. The site of the little house is marked by a small obelisk erected at the beginning of the XIXth century.

It was near Athelney that the remarkable work of art known as "The Alfred Jewel" was found. The only reasonable explanation of its discovery at that

spot is that it must have been lost by the great king when in the neighbourhood, perhaps when he was actually there during the crisis of 877 to 878. The inscription on the ornament translated is, "Alfred caused me to be wrought," but no satisfactory explanation of its purpose has yet been offered.

SKETCH MAP SHOWING THE POSITIONS OF THE PLACES MENTIONED IN THIS BOOK

A CHRONOLOGY

OF THE

BISHOPS OF BATH AND WELLS AND BUILDING DATES OF WELLS CATHEDRAL

A CHRONOLOGY

DATE	BISHOPS AND BUILDING DETAILS	KINGS, ETC.
900		EDWARD I., "The Elder"
909–10	*Æthelhelm*	
923	*Wulfhelm I.*	ÆTHELSTAN
926	*Ælfheah*	
938	*Wulfhelm II.*	
939		EADMUND I.
946		EADRED
955		EADWIG
956	*Brihthelm*	
959		EADGAR
974	*Cyneweard*	
975	*Sigegar*	EDWARD II., "The Martyr"
978		ÆTHELRED II., "The Redeless"
997	*Ælfwine*	
999	*Lyfing* or *Æthelstan*	
1013	*Æthelwine*	SWEYNE FORKBEARD, the Dane
1014		ÆTHELRED II. restored
1016		EADMUND II., "Ironside"
		CNUT, the Dane
1024	*Brihtwig* (*Merewit*)	
1033	*Duduc the Saxon*	
1035		HAROLD I.
1040		HARTHACNUT

ROMANESQUE EARLY NORMAN SCHOOL

1042		EDWARD III., "The Confessor"
1060	*Gisa de Lotharingia*	
1066		HAROLD II., Godwinson
		THE NORMAN CONQUEST

DATE	BISHOPS AND BUILDING DETAILS	KINGS, ETC.
1066		William I.
1087		William II., "Rufus"
1088	*Jean de Villula* Shifted Seat to Bath	
	Romanesque Late Norman School	
1100		Henry I.
1122	*Godfrey*	
1135		Stephen
1136	*Robert de Lewes* Placed Wells on equality with Bath Foundation of present Cathedral	
1148	Dedication of Cathedral	
1154		Henry II.
	Transitional Norman	
1166-74	No Bishop	
1174	*Reginald de Bohun* Rebuilding of Cathedral in its present form, Nave, Transepts and Choir	
	Early English Gothic	
1189		Richard I.
1192	*Savaric*	
1199		John
1205	*Jocelin de Welles* Nave completed Building of West Front	
1216		Henry III.
1242	*Roger* Title Bishop of Bath and Wells	
1248	*William de Button I.*	
1265	*Walter Giffard*	

DATE	BISHOPS AND BUILDING DETAILS	KINGS, ETC.
1266	*William de Button II.*	
1272		EDWARD I.
1275	*Robert de Burnell*	
	Added to Cathedral and Bishop's Palace	
	DECORATED GOTHIC	
1293	*William de March*	
	Chapter-House and Undercroft	
1302	*Walter de Haselshaw*	
1307		EDWARD II.
1309	*John de Drokensford*	
	Built Central Tower and Lady Chapel	
1327		EDWARD III.
1329	*Ralph de Shrewsbury*	
	Eastern arm of Choir and Retro-choir built, also Pulpitum	
	Inverted Arches constructed	
	PERPENDICULAR GOTHIC	
1363	*John of Barnet*	
1367	*John Harewell*	
	The South-Western Tower	
1377		RICHARD II.
1386	*Walter Skirlaw*	
1388	*Ralph Erghum*	
1399		HENRY IV.
1401	*Henry Bowett*	
1407	*Nicholas Bubwith*	
	North-West Tower	
	The Bubwith Chantry	
1413		HENRY V.
1422		HENRY VI.
1425	*John Stafford*	

DATE	BISHOPS AND BUILDING DETAILS	KINGS, ETC.
1443	*Thomas Beckington* Cloisters completed The Vicars' Close, Chain-Gate Bridge, etc. The Beckington Chantry	
1461		EDWARD IV.
1466	*Robert Stillington* Hugh Sugar's Chantry	
1483		EDWARD V. RICHARD III.
1485		HENRY VII.
1492	*Richard Fox*	
1495	*Oliver King*	
1504	*Adriano, Cardinal de Castello*	
1509		HENRY VIII.
1518	*Thomas, Cardinal Wolsey*	
1523	*John Clerk*	
1541	*William Knight*	
1547		EDWARD VI.
1549	*William Barlow* Cathedral defaced	
1553		MARY I.
1554	*Gilbert Bourne*	
1558		ELIZABETH
1560	*Gilbert Berkeley*	
1581	*Thomas Godwin*	
1593	*John Still*	
1603		JAMES I.
1608	*James Montague*	
1616	*Arthur Lake*	
1625		CHARLES I.
1626	*William Laud*	
1628	*Leonard Mauve*	
1629	*Walter Curll*	
1632	*William Piers*	
1649	Cathedral damaged	THE COMMONWEALTH PROTECTOR OLIVER CROMWELL ,, RICHARD CROMWELL
1660	Restoration and redecoration	CHARLES II.
1670	*Robert Creyghton*	

DATE	BISHOPS AND BUILDING DETAILS	KINGS, ETC.
1672	*Peter Mews*	
1685	*Thomas Ken*	JAMES II.
	Damage by Monmouth's levies	
1689		WILLIAM III.
		MARY II.
1691	*Richard Kidder*	
1695		WILLIAM III. alone
1702		ANNE
1703	*George Hooper*	
1714		GEORGE I.
1727	*John Wynne*	GEORGE II.
1743	*Edward Willes*	
1760		GEORGE III.
1774	*Charles Moss*	
1802	*Richard Beadon*	
1820		GEORGE IV.
1824	*G. H. Law*	
1830		WILLIAM IV.
1837		VICTORIA
1842	Restoration of Nave, Transepts and Lady Chapel	
1845	*Richard Bagot*	
1848	Reckless "Restoration" of Choir	
1854	*Lord Auckland*	
1869	*Lord Arthur Hervey*	
	West Front restored	
1894	*G. W. Kennion*	
1901		EDWARD VII.
1910		GEORGE V.
1914–18		The Great World War
1921	*St. John Wynne-Willson*	

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PERIOD
Second half of XII Century

PERIOD
First half of XIII Century

PERIOD
Middle and latter half of XIII Century

PERIOD
First half of XIV Century

PERIOD
Second half of XIV Century

PERIOD
First half of XV Century

PERIOD
Second half of 12th Century

PERIOD
Latter part of 12th Century

PERIOD
Second half of 14th Century

PERIOD
First half of 15th Century

PERIOD
End of 15th Century

PERIOD
First half of 15th Century